DECEMBER 2017

# FINAL

## Environmental Assessment (EA) & Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for Obstruction Removal

## Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

**Prepared for:**

CAA™
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

**Prepared by:**

CHA
design/construction solutions

# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL

# HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT (HFD)

FAA AIP NO. 3-09-0900-010-2014
CAA CONTRACT NO. 2014-02
CHA CONTRACT NO. 29067

August 2017

Prepared for:
Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA)

Prepared BY:
CHA Consulting, Inc.

**FEDERAL FINDING**

The preparation of this Final Environmental Assessment (EA) included substantial public outreach in the form of an initial public meeting, followed by three formal public hearings at the request of local municipalities and the general public. Minutes and transcripts of each meeting are provided herein, including copies of all written comments submitted regarding draft document. Written responses to all regulatory agencies and environmental organization are also provide within this document, as well as general responses to public comments.

Based upon review of the public comments, it is evident that the role of this EA may not be fully understood. As such it is specifically acknowledged here that issuance of this Final EA and federal Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) should not be interpreted or inferred that potential impacts do not exist, or that no additional environmental analysis is needed. In contrast, the FONSI indicates that it is anticipated that with application of appropriate measure, documented in regulatory permits, that potential impacts can likely be reasonable mitigated to avoid significant socioeconomic and environmental impacts.

**Environmental Consequence –** The key environmental concerns are listed below and addressed in Chapter 5.

Air Quality and Health Impacts: The tree obstruction removal will not change the operating characteristics of the Airport. There will be no changes in activity levels, aircraft types, or facilities and as such there will be no changes in emissions as a result of the project. While any tree removal has some effect of carbon dioxide and oxygen levels (measurable or otherwise), the proposed action will retain all affected areas in a vegetative state with the associated benefits to air quality. Significant regional health effects are not anticipated. See Section 5.1 and 5.14.

Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Refuges: The Folly Brook Natural Area and other designated preservation areas are located within the proposed tree removal area. Federal regulations protect such areas from conversion to a transportation use. As such, the project must not and will not eliminate these protected areas from public use. The proposed action will alter existing trees and vegetation, but will not restrict access or use of the designated areas, and will follow the requirement of the 1990 tree maintenance plan between the City of Hartford and the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut. See Section 5.5.

Endangered & Threatened Species: Direct impacts to these species may be reduced via use of seasonal restrictions to avoid breeding activities, or in the case of nesting Bald Eagles, no cutting within 660 feet of an active nest. This statement will be reviewed by US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) during the permitting process and determine if biological surveys and/or mitigation is necessary. See Section 5.7.

Floodplains & Water Quality: Tree removal does not impact flood levels; however, it has potential to increase runoff rates. In this instance, the potential for erosion during the selective tree removal is reduced as remaining vegetation and ground covers will protect against erosion. Adherence to a soil and erosion control plan and associated permits will further mitigate any potential impacts. See Section 5.8 and 5.16.

The CTDEEP has expressed a concern for the floodplain forest habitat that exists in the project area. As such, it is anticipated that design and permitting efforts will include measure to minimize disturbance to this biologic community.

Wetlands: The proposed project will alter the vegetation and sunlight conditions in the removal area, but does not involved filling or hydrological impacts to wetlands. Coordination with the CTDEEP Inland Wetlands Resources Division (IWRD) will occur during the design process to satisfy the Connecticut Inland Wetland Protection Act. Permits will likely be necessary, and will include measures to mitigate potential impacts. See Section 5.17.

**Next Steps –** The issuance of this FONSI enables the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) to proceed to the more detailed analysis necessary to define and advance the project. While the project Alternatives describe the broad options under consideration (see Section 3), the next step in the process includes the detailed design plans and required agency permits/approvals that identify the specific details that have been requested in many public comments. Advancement to the next step in the process will address many of the specific comments received during the EA preparation.

**Recommendations –** Although existing airspace easements and/or tree clearing zones exist on all affected property, both the City of Hartford and Town of Wethersfield have expressed reservations or opposition to the proposed tree obstruction removal. As such, follow issuance of the FONSI, the FAA recommends the following general actions to address local concerns, and advance the project for protection of airspace and public safety:

- Further refine the proposed tree removal plan as the next step. The minimum safety requirement remains clearing penetrations to the FAA design standard surface to each runway.

- Conduct a pre-permitting meeting with CTDEEP to discuss required permits and additional environmental evaluation that may be necessary.
- Define the proposed clearing methods, means, and access anticipated to satisfy likely environmental permit conditions.
- Work with CTDEEP and local municipalities to prepare a vegetation management plan (or similar document) to address the short- and long-term maintenance of tree obstructions.
- Consider updated easements between the CAA and applicable municipalities/property owners/organizations. Although clearing rights are described in existing legal documents, modern easements could be issued to be consistent with a vegetation management plan.
- As part of the design and permitting process, include additional public outreach activities.

Finally, it is noted that the CAA remains federally obligated to maintain and operate the Airport for public use, which includes the requirement to remove tree obstructions to the existing airport runways. The above recommendations are intended advance the goal of obstruction removal, satisfy public safety requirements, and minimize potential environmental impacts.

**Finding**

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed federal action is consistent with existing national policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable environmental requirements and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 101 (2) (c) of the NEPA.

Approved: R. Doucette _____ 8/1/2017

Richard Doucette
Manager, Environmental Programs

Date

# RECORD OF DECISION
# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION (EIE) FOR OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL

# HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT (HFD)

FAA AIP NO. 3-09-0900-010-2014
CAA CONTRACT NO. 2014-02
CHA CONTRACT NO. 29067

December 2017

Prepared for:
Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA)

Prepared BY:
CHA Consulting, Inc.

**Notice**: On November 11, 2017, the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management (OPM) determined that the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) "shall not be construed to be a department, institution or agency of the state", and that the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) is not applicable to CAA actions. See CT OPM notice included in Appendix B. As such, environmental review for the project is not subject to CEPA, and this ROD (prepared prior to November 2017) is not applicable. Nevertheless, as this study followed the CEPA process, the ROD and references to CEPA and the EIE where retained for informational purposes.

## 1.0 DECISION

The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), owner and operator of the Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD) intends to implement the proposed action detailed in the Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal issued in July 2017 and included with this document.

A single document serving as an EA/EIE was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) to address the potential impacts associated with the objects that penetrate the airspace which are classified as airspace obstructions, and should be removed to safely accommodate approaching and departing aircraft. As the airspace surfaces extend well

beyond the airport's property boundary, this EIE includes an off-airport obstruction removal and mitigation review.

This decision is based on careful consideration of the alternatives and potential environmental impacts documented in the Final EA/EIE.

## 2.0 PROJECT LOCATION AND SUMMARY OF ACTION

The Hartford-Brainard Airport is located approximately two miles southeast of downtown Hartford just east of Interstate I-91 and approximately 12 miles south of Bradley International Airport. The airport encompasses approximately 201 acres, and is owned by the CAA. HFD is located in Hartford County, City of Hartford. The airport is 64 miles west of Providence, Rhode Island; 92 miles southwest of Boston, Massachusetts; and 101 miles northeast of New York, New York. The airport is accessible via Interstate 91, which is a major route between the cities of Hartford and New Haven, CT.

Based on the evaluation identified in the Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal document, and the review by CAA and FAA, the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative has been chosen as the "Proposed Action" and "Preferred Alternative" for Hartford-Brainard Airport. This determination is primarily related to the Full Removal Alternative being considered not practical or feasible from an environmental and cost standpoint. The No Action Alternative is also not considered appropriate as it does not address the safety of airport users and does not satisfy FAA requirements or obligations.

## 3.0 STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

No significant impacts to the environment are anticipated as a result of the proposed action. All practicable means to avoid or minimize any associated environmental impacts as identified in the Final EA/EIE will be adopted. The mitigation measures identified in the Final EA/EIE will be adopted and implemented as part of the proposed action.

## 4.0 SUMMARY OF AGENCY CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

A Scoping Notice was published in the CEPA Environmental Monitor on June 16, 2015 to allow for 30 days of public comment, ending on July, 17, 2015. The Connecticut DEEP provided scoping comments dated July 17, 2015 which can be found in the attached Final EA/EIE document which follows the ROD.

A Draft EA/EIE was prepared for the project in December 2016 and submitted to the stakeholder agencies for review and comment. Contact was also initiated with federal and state resource agencies prior to the Draft EA/EIE during the development of alternatives, including:

- The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP), Office of Environmental Review
- The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP), Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
- Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- State of Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribe.

In December, 2016 the Draft EA/EIE was issued and made available for review and comment on the CAA project website (http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/) and published in the Environmental Monitor (http://www.ct.gov/ceq/site/default.asp). A notice of the Draft EA/EIE publication, including information on how the document could be accessed, the location, date and time of the public meetings and hearings were published in the following publications:

**Notice of Public Meetings**

**Wethersfield Rare Reminder**
First Publication: December 29, 2016
Second Publication: January 5, 2017

**Hartford Courant**
First Publication: January 2, 2017
Second Publication: January 9, 2017

Per CEPA requirements, the notices were also mailed to CTDEEP, the City of Wethersfield, City of Hartford, Town of East Hartford, Town of Glastonbury, and the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

Comments for the public meeting and public hearings were accepted through May 22, 2017. Approximately 113 comment letters or emails were received during this period from agencies and the public and can be found in Appendix B of the accompanying EA/EIE.

**Public Meeting**

A public meeting was held on January 12, 2017 at the Wethersfield Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109. This meeting was attended by representatives from CAA and CHA Consulting, Inc. who introduced the project and discussed the identified alternatives and proposed action. This meeting was attended by approximately fifty-eight (58) members of the public. The public meeting notes can be found in Appendix D of the accompanying EA/EIE.

**Public Hearings**

Public hearings were also conducted and attended by representatives from CAA, CTDEEP, City/Town Officials, and CHA Consulting, Inc. who introduced the project and discussed the identified alternatives and proposed action. This hearing information is listed below and the hearing transcripts can be found in Appendix D of the accompanying EA/EIE.

**Notice of Public Hearing**

**Wethersfield Rare Reminder**
First Publication: March 30, 2017
Second Publication: April 6, 2017
Third Publication: April 13, 2017

**The Glastonbury Citizen**
First Publication: March 30, 2017
Second Publication: April 6, 2017
Third Publication: April 13, 2017

**Hearing 1**

Date: April 18, 2017
Location: Bulkeley High School, Auditorium located 300 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114
Number of Attendees: 32

**Hearing 2**

Date: April, 19, 2017
Location: Glastonbury Town Hall, Council Chambers. 2155 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033
Number of Attendees: 12

**Hearing 3**
Date: April 27, 2017
Location: Wethersfield Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109
Number of Attendees: 52

Comments and issues identified from the public and agency stakeholders were reviewed, acknowledged and incorporated into the alternatives analysis, proposed action, and ultimately will be used in the project design and analysis of environmental consequences where feasible and practicable. The Final EA/EIE including such revisions was publicly displayed and available for comment on the CAA project website (http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/ in order to fulfill the requirements of CEPA and is included as part of the ROD. Agencies that commented on the Draft EA/EIE as well as municipalities affected by the action were notified of the availability of the Final EA/EIE.

# FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)
# FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION (EIE)

**The complete report can be found on the CAA website at**
http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/

AIP NO. 3-09-0900-010-2014
CAA CONTRACT NO. 2014-02

# FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT (EIE) EVALUATION FOR OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL HARTFORD BRAINARD AIRPORT (HFD)

FAA AIP NO. 3-09-0900-010-2014
CAA CONTRACT NO. 2014-02

December 2017

Prepared for:
Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA)

Prepared BY:
CHA Consulting, Inc.

In Association with:
DY Consultants, Inc.
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

| ACRONYMS | |
|---|---|
| ABBREVIATION | MEANING |
| AAC | Aircraft Approach Category |
| AC | Advisory Circular |
| ADG | Airplane Design Group |
| ARC | Airport Reference Code |
| CAA | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| CEPA | Connecticut Environmental Policy Act |
| DEEP | Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection |
| DOT | US Department of Transportation |
| EA | Environmental Assessment (Federal) |
| EPA | US Environmental Protection Agency |
| FAA | Federal Aviation Administration |
| FAR | Federal Aviation Regulation |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| HFD | Hartford-Brainard Airport |
| NAAQS | National Ambient Air Quality Standards |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 |
| NPIAS | National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems |
| O3 | Ozone |
| RDC | Runway Design Code |
| RPZ | Runway Protection Zone |
| TERPS | Terminal Instrument Procedures |

**Note: Substantive report edits between the Draft and Final Environmental Assessment are indicated with underlined text.**

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the evaluation of potential impacts associated with tree removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport which is operated by the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA). The evaluation addresses obstruction removal associated with Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77, Safe, Efficient Use, and Preservation of the Navigable Airspace and published Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS), which define the airspace surrounding runways. Objects that penetrate the airspace are classified as airspace obstructions, and should be removed to safely accommodate approaching and departing aircraft. As the airspace surfaces extend well beyond the airport's property boundary, this EA includes an off-airport obstruction removal and mitigation review. It is noted that tree removal activities may require environmental permits based on site conditions, which will be made in coordination with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP).

This EA was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) to address potential impacts associated with the tree obstruction removal while providing the opportunity for public involvement and comments. The study was conducted in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidelines including the "Environmental Desk Reference for Airport Actions", FAA Order 5050.4B "National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions" and FAA Order 1050.1E "Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures." Since the project would potentially be federally-funded, the EA must comply with federal requirements (i.e., NEPA, FAA).

As part of a previous study, the CAA and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have identified that trees penetrate the airspace of Hartford-Brainard Airport, including locations beyond airport property. Most of the recommended tree removal areas are located on land owned by the City of Hartford, within both the City and the Town of Wethersfield. Dating back to the 1960's, permanent zones were established and illustrated to enable the removal to trees that penetrate the airspace surface. These zones include the approaches to each runway and were part of transfer of the Airport to the State. The locations of the zones are generally the same as the proposed tree removal. Although such zones exist, it may still be beneficial to establish permanent easements between the CAA and the public property owners for the removal of tree obstructions. Such easements may include limitations on the tree removal activities, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

This EA includes the following sections:

- Introduction
- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives Analysis and Proposed Action
- Affected Environment
- Environmental Consequences
- List of Preparers
- Correspondence and Public Comments

## 1.1 ACTIVITIES SINCE THE RELEASE OF THE DRAFT EA

Following the release of the Draft EA document (December 2016), a Public Meeting was held on January 12th, 2017 at the Wethersfield Town Hall. During that meeting, substantial concerns were expressed by the public and municipal officials regarding the proposed tree obstruction removal, including the limited opportunity for the public to review and comment on the Draft EA. As a result the CAA held three formal public hearings to allow the opportunity for additional public comment as follows:

- Hartford – April 18 at the Bulkeley High School
- Glastonbury – April 19th at the Glastonbury Town Hall
- Wethersfield – April 27that the Wethersfield Town Hall

All written and verbal comments provided during the original and extended public comment period (through May 2017) are provided in this Final EA document in Appendix E. Based on the comments received, the CAA has worked with the FAA and reduced the area of recommended tree removal from approximately 40 acres to 30 acres by refining the removal to include only that necessary per federal airport design standards. An illustration of the draft and revised obstruction removal areas is provided in Appendix A.

CAA expressed at the public hearings that the Final EA is not the end of the environmental review process, but rather the initial step to identify potential impacts. This EA and the associated federal finding have concluded that impacts of the tree obstruction removal can likely be mitigated, which enables the project to move to the detailed evaluation stage.

Nevertheless, the CAA understands that public concerns remain, and as such intends to advance the project to include the following future activities:

- Further refine the tree removal plan to include means, methods, and access, while satisfying the minimum safety requirements per FAA design standards
- Conduct a pre-permitting meeting with CTDEEP to discuss required permits and additional environmental evaluation
- Work local municipalities to prepare a vegetation management plan
- Consider updated easements between the CAA and applicable municipalities/property owners/organizations
- Conduct additional public outreach activities as part of the development of the obstruction removal plans.

Finally, it is noted that the CAA remains federally obligated to maintain and operate the Airport for public use, which includes the requirement to remove tree obstructions to the existing airport runways. The above steps are intended to advance the goal of obstruction removal, minimize potential environmental impacts, and involve the public and municipalities in the process.

## 1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISITING FACILITIES

The Hartford-Brainard Airport is located approximately two miles southeast of downtown Hartford just east of Interstate and I-91 and approximately 12 miles south of Bradley International Airport. The Airport encompasses approximately 201 acres, and is owned by the CAA. HFD is located in Hartford County, City of Hartford. The Airport is 64 miles west of Providence, Rhode Island; 92 miles southwest of Boston, Massachusetts; and 101 miles

northeast of New York, New York. The Airport is accessible via Interstate 91, which is a major route between the cities of Hartford and New Haven, CT.

### Runway 2-20

Runway 2-20 serves as the primary runway and is 4,417 feet long and 150 feet wide. The Runway 2 approach end has a 411 foot displaced threshold due to obstructions (i.e., trees) located within the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 approach surface. Refer to Table 1 for a side by side comparison of the airport runways. The Runway 20 approach end for this runway has a threshold displacement of 560 feet due to obstructions (i.e., trees and flood control levee).

### Runway 11-29

Runway 11-29 serves as the crosswind runway and is 2,314 feet long and 71 feet wide. The Runway 29 approach end has a 265 foot displaced threshold due to obstructions (i.e., trees) located within the FAR Part 77 approach surface. Refer to Table 1 for a side by side comparison of the intersecting Runway 2-20.

| TABLE 1- EXISTING AIRPORT FACILITIES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| RUNWAY 2-20 | | RUNWAY 11-29 | |
| Runway Length (Feet) | 4,417' | Runway Length (Feet) | 2,314' |
| Width (Feet) | 150' | Width (Feet) | 71' |
| Surface Type | Asphalt (Grooved) | Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Parallel Taxiway | TWY A | Parallel Taxiway | TWY B |
| Threshold Displacement (Feet) | RWY 2: 411' | Threshold Displacement (Feet) | RWY 11: None |
| | RWY 20: 560' | | RWY 29: 265' |

Source: Data Compiled by CHA Consulting, Inc. (2015).

## 1.3 BASED AIRCRAFT AND AVIATION ACTIVITY

Hartford-Brainard Airport is a general aviation facility that serves private, corporate, and charter aircraft operating for recreational/personal, training, and business purposes. The Airport does not offer scheduled airline service. There are a total of 125 based aircraft at the Airport.

Table 2 lists the existing based aircraft and Table 3 depicts annual operations at HFD. Note that an aircraft operation is defined as either one landing or one takeoff, therefore each flight includes at least two operations which consists of one takeoff and one landing.

| TABLE 2- BASED AIRCRAFT | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SINGLE ENGINE | MULTI ENGINE | JET | ROTOR | GLIDERS | MILITARY | TOTAL |
| Based Aircraft | 110 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 125 |

Source: FAA 5010 Data Dated (2011).

| TABLE 3- ANNUAL OPERATIONS | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AIR CARRIER | AIR TAXI | GA LOCAL | GA ITINERANT | MILITARY | TOTAL |
| Operations | 0 | 5,522 | 38,500 | 36,927 | 525 | 81,474 |

Source: FAA 5010 Data Dated (2011).

Appendix A contains a map that represents the Project Study Area and depicts the location of the airport and the general approaches to each runway end. Chapter 3 identifies the specific recommended tree removal locations.

## 1.4 FAA DESIGN STANDARDS

The design, or critical, aircraft is defined as the most demanding aircraft operating or projected to operate on the airport's runway, taxiway, or apron. According to the FAA, the design aircraft can be either a specific aircraft model or a composite of several aircraft, and must account for a minimum of 500 annual itinerant operations.

The FAA uses the approach speed and wingspan of the design aircraft to classify the airport. The FAA term for this classification is the airport reference code (ARC). Table 4 provides the FAA specifications associated with the ARC classification system.

| TABLE 4 - AIRPORT REFERENCE CODES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AIRCRAFT APPROACH CATEGORY (AAC)[1] | | AIRPLANE DESIGN GROUP (ADG)[2] | | |
| CATEGORY | APPROACH SPEED | GROUP | TAIL HEIGHT | WINGSPAN |
| A | Approach speed less than 91 knots | I | < 20' | <49' |
| B | Approach speed 91 knots or more but less than 121 knots | II | 20' - < 30' | 49' - < 79' |
| C | Approach speed 121 knots or more but less than 141 knots | III | 30' - < 45' | 79' - < 118' |
| D | Approach speed 141 knots or more but less than 166 knots | IV | 45' - < 60' | 118' - < 171' |
| E | Approach speed 166 knots or more | V | 60' - < 66' | 171' - < 214' |
| | | VI | 66' - < 80' | 214' - < 262' |

Source: FAA AC 150-5300-13A, Airport Design[1].

As previously identified, Hartford-Brainard Airport is served by two runways (Runway 2-20 and Runway 11-29). The design aircraft for Runway 2-20 is the Cessna Citation CJ4 which has an aircraft approach category (AAC) of B and an airplane design group (ADG) of II. Therefore, based on these design aircraft characteristics for Runway 2-2, the airport reference code is B-II. The Cessna 182 Skylane has been identified as the design aircraft for Runway 11-22. The Runway is classified with an AAC of B and an ADG of I. Therefore, based on these design aircraft characteristics Runway 11-22 has an ARC of B-I. Table 5 provides a summary of the runway design codes (RDC) classifications for both runways at Hartford.

| TABLE 5 - RUNWAY DESIGN CODE SUMMARY | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Runway | Design Aircraft | AAC | ADG |
| 2-20 | Cessna Citation CJ4 | B | II |
| 11-29 | Cessna 182 Skylane | B | I |

Source: Hartford-Brainard Airport Master Plan Update (2013).

After determining the airport runway design code, the airport itself is classified with the appropriate ARC. The ARC is used for airport planning and design purposes and is determined by the highest RDC at the airport. The ARC uses the same classification system as the RDC. Runway 2-20 is classified with the highest RDC at the Airport. Therefore, the ARC for HFD is classified as B-II.

### Airspace Obstructions

Overall airspace obstructions include penetrations to any number of defined airspace surfaces, but predominantly include FAR Part 77 imaginary surfaces and Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS) surfaces, which define the airspace surrounding runways. The most restrictive surfaces are usually the Part 77 surfaces, which are discussed below.

The FAA's Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77, titled *Obstructions Affecting Navigable Airspace* are used to determine obstructions to air navigation and communication facilities. These are commonly referred to as "imaginary surfaces" and are established with relation to the airport and to each runway. The size of each such imaginary surface is based on the category of each runway according to the type of approach available or planned for that runway. The slope and dimensions of the approach surface applied to each end of a runway are determined by the most precise approach procedure existing or planned for that runway end. The definitions of the Part 77 imaginary surfaces are listed below.

### Horizontal Surface

The horizontal surface is established 150 feet above the airport elevation. The perimeter of the horizontal surface created by swinging arcs of a specified radii from the center of each end of the primary surface of each runway of each airport and connecting the adjacent arcs by lines tangent to those arcs.

### Conical Surface

A surface extending outward and upward from the periphery of the horizontal surface at a slope of 20 to 1 for a horizontal distance of 4,000 feet.

### Primary Surface

A surface longitudinally centered on a runway that extends 200 feet beyond each end of that runway. The elevation of any point on the primary surface is the same as the elevation of the nearest point on the runway centerline.

### Approach Surface

A surface longitudinally centered on the extended runway centerline and extending outward and upward from each end of the primary surface. An approach surface is applied to each end of each runway based upon the type of approach available or planned for that runway end.

### Transitional Surface

The transitional surface extends outward and upward at right angles to the runway centerline and the runway centerline extended at a slope of 7 to 1 from the sides of the primary surface and from the sides of the approach surfaces.

Table 6 summarizes the FAR Part 77 surface dimensions at Hartford-Brainard.

| TABLE 6- FAR PART 77 SURFACE DIMENSIONS (FEET) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SURFACE** | **RUNWAY 2** | **RUNWAY 20** | **RUNWAY 11** | **RUNWAY 29** |
| Primary Surface Width | 500 | 500 | 250 | 250 |
| Horizontal Surface Radius | 10,000 | 10,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Approach Surface Width at End | 3,500 | 1,500 | 1,250 | 1,250 |
| Approach Surface Length | 10,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Approach Procedure | Non-Precision | Visual | Visual | Visual |
| Approach Slope | 34:1 | 20:1 | 20:1 | 20:1 |

Source: CHA Consulting, Inc. (2015).

In addition to Part 77, the US Standards for Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS) are used by FAA to develop all instrument approaches and other procedures to airports. These procedures are used by aircraft when visibility and cloud ceilings are low. TERPS are defined in FAA Order 8260.3B, and include numerous approach and departure surfaces surrounding runways. As the TERPS surfaces can be complex and differ from Part 77 surfaces, the FAA has provided overall airport design standards for obstruction clearing beyond any runway.

These obstruction clearing standards are defined in FAA Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Airport Design, and determined the minimum obstruction removal required for any runway end. In locations off-airport property, where the CAA does not own rights to clear all airspace penetrations, clearing the minimum design standards defined in the Advisory Circular may be the most feasible alternative.

# 2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

**Purpose:** The purpose of the proposed obstruction removal project evaluated in this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to promote safety by bringing the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace.

**Need:** The FAA has established airspace and design criteria to provide for safe aircraft operations. In 2012 the State conducted an obstruction study to evaluate the airspace at the Airport. Based on the FAA design criteria, the results of this analysis identified existing safety deficiencies at HFD which include multiple obstructions to the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 surfaces, Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS), and Airport Design Standards. The results of this study identified that the Airport does not provide adequate airspace surfaces to its runways.

# 3.0 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS AND PREFERRED ACTION

This chapter of the Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the potential alternatives for airport obstruction removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport. The recent airport obstruction study identified substatial areas of tree obstructions in all areas surrounding the airport. The ideal alternative from an aeronautical standpoint would be to remove all tree penetrations to the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 "Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace" and Terminal Procedures (TERPS) surfaces. However, as part of the scoping process for this study, it was determined that this approach would be impractical, and other other alternatives would need to be developed.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and FAA Order 5050.4B require the consideration of alternatives commensurate with the purpose and need statement. The intent is to evaluate various options that address the recognized need so that potential environmental impacts can be compared and minimized. This chapter presents the various options considered, as well as those deemed infeasible. Where appropriate, temporary access routes, removal methods, and site specific procedures are also discussed.

## 3.1 ALTERNATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION

As part of the effort to identify project alternatives, the recommendations from the 2015 Airport Master Plan were considered, as well as agency comments and the concerns of affected parties and property owners. This coordination effort took into consideration both the environmental and socioeconomic impacts as well as project costs which were evaluated as part of the process to refine and develop the alternatives. The results of this refinement resulted in two alternatives plus the No Action option. All three are presented herein for consideration.

**Existing Conditions (Runway 2):**
Tree Obstructions would remain under the No Action Alternative

### 3.1.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative retains all obstructions as is, with CAA taking no action to address airspace hazards. The existing trees and other obstructions would continue remain as penetrations to the local airspace. As this option results in potential dangers to users of the airport it is not desirable from the perspective of the flying public. Mitigating potential airspace hazards is an important mission of the CAA and FAA. In fact, addressing airspace hazards is required by the FAA s. Although, this alternative fails to improve safety for passengers and crews operating at the airport, it serves as the baseline for comparison to the build alternatives.

The No Action Alternative has the least potential impact to the environment and effect on property owners, as there are no actions involved. This option also has no implementation costs. The No Action alternative cannot be selected as the preferred action as it would violate the airports federal obligations for hazard removal and mitigation. Airports developed or improved with federal funds are obligated to prevent the growth or establishment of obstructions in the approaches to the airport and to take reasonable actions to remove existing

obstructions. This requirement is discussed in the FAA Airport Compliance Manual (FAA Order 5190.6B), which sets forth policies and procedures to be followed by public airports. This requirement is also listed in federal grant assurance No. 20, Hazard Removal and Mitigation of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), per Federal Statute 49 U.S.C., Section 47101.

It is also noted that the No Action Alternative does not eliminate potential environmental and social impacts as the increased risk of airport operations poses an impact to airport users. Potential aircraft incidents could create environmental damage to wetlands, habitat, and endanger emergency responders and even persons and property on the ground.

The following summary box highlights potential advantages and disadvantages of the No Action Alternative.

| No Action Alternative | |
|---|---|
| Goal(s): This option reduces impacts as it takes no action to remove, lower, mark, or mitigate existing or potential future airspace obstructions. | |
| Description: Tree obstructions have been identified at all four runway ends, Transitional Surface areas, and the outer airspace of the Horizontal and Conical Surfaces. These presumed hazards would remain in place, and potentially increase in size and penetration with additional tree growth. | |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
| • No wetland impacts (temporary or permanent)<br>• No impacts to biological resources, habitats, or species of concern<br>• No impacts to parks or recreation<br>• No impacts or disturbance to property owners<br>• No project costs | • Retains potential hazards to airport users<br>• Retains a potential hazard to people and property on the ground surrounding the airport<br>• Does not comply with FAA design standards or grant assurances<br>• Risks future FAA funding for improvements to the airport |

### 3.1.2 Full Obstruction Removal Alternative

The Full Obstruction Removal Alternative would clear all obstructions to the FAR Part 77 Approach and Transitional Surfaces. These surfaces are generally the most encompassing for approach protection, whereas if cleared, it would generally assure clearance of other airspace surfaces (e.g., TERPS, threshold surface, PAPI Obstacle Clearance Surface, etc.). Within the outer Part 77 surfaces (i.e., Horizontal and Conical), this alternative includes obstruction lighting for the high terrain and tree obstructions surrounding the airport.

The Part 77 Approach Surface is trapezoidal in shape, and extends away from the runway along the centerline at a specific slope, as discussed in Section 1. The specific size and slope depends upon the aircraft served and visibility minimums of the runway end. The figures included in Appendix A for each runway end illustrate the Approach Surfaces, with the blue dots depicting penetrations to the Approach Surface and orange dots for obstructions to the Transitional Surfaces. These dots represent the most critical obstructions only, there are likely many more trees penetrations than shown by the dots. As such, in order to removal all obstructions per this alternative,

comprehensive tree clearing would be necessary in all locations where these dots are present. In other words, the colored dots (blue and orange) indicate locations of obstructions to the Part 77 surfaces, which would be removed under the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative. It is noted that a flood control levee is located immediately beyond three of the four runway ends. The levee is 20 to 35 feet above the runway ends, and is currently equipped with obstruction lighting. Although the levee is an Approach Surface penetration, this alternative does not include any actions to move or lower that obstruction.

The approach surface to the primary runway includes a relatively flat 34:1 slope on the Runway 2 end, which results in penetrations over a large area, including residential, industrial, and commercial parcels. The Runway 20 end, and both ends of secondary Runway 11-29, includes a steeper 20:1 slope. The tree obstruction in these locations are limited to industrial and commercial parcels.

For the airport as a whole, this alternative would result in approximately 74 acres of tree removal. For tree removals on residential and other private parcels, permanent 'avigation' easements are typically required. Avigation easements refer a permanent conveyance of airspace, from a property owner to the airport, granting the airport the right to overfly the property and remove obstructions to a defined airspace surface. These easements involve appraisals, negotiation, and acquisition of the perpetual rights to remove existing tree obstructions and prevent future obstructions.

This comprehensive alternative would satisfy FAA requirements and improve safety of all operations at the airport, as well as on surrounding properties. However, as highlighted in the summary box, this alternative would include potentially significant impacts based on the large area involved, including wetland and sensitive habitat, as well as the number of residents and properties affected. The affected residential area south of the Airport is a history district of "Old Wethersfield". The cost and time involved to complete this alternative would be substantial, to the point that the successful completion is questionable due to the number of agreements needed with private parties.

To reduce potential environmental impacts of this Alternative, the tree clearing parameters would primarily include removal of all sizable trees, but retaining small trees and underbrush. Tree stumps would be left in place to minimize ground disturbance and potential erosion. This practice r reduces impacts to wetlands, floodplains, and archeological resources. However, it is not a permanent solution as trees will eventually regrow. Nevertheless, this alternative may be considered to have a 20-year design life.

On residential properties, the removal parameters would be limited to selective removal of tall trees only, with stump grinding, top soil placement and seeding. Removal of branches, wood chips, and repair of damage to lawn areas would also be included. Small trees that are 20 feet or more below the surface would be left in place.

**Sample:** Selective tree removal underway in a residential area, with shorter trees left in place.

Overall, the tree removal approach and methods would vary based on site conditions, environmental sensitivity, and land use, with the detailed methodology determined during the design and permitting process. Removals are typically conducted during dryer periods of the years (i.e., autumn) or winter, when partly frozen ground reduces temporary construction impacts. Winter removals are also beneficial to reduce impacts to bat, bird, and plant species.

The following summary box highlights potential advantages and disadvantages of the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative.

| Full Obstruction Removal Alternative | |
|---|---|
| Goal(s): This option removes all penetrations to the FAR Part 77 Approach and Transitional Surfaces, with obstruction lighting for the Horizontal and Conical Surfaces. | |
| Description: A comprehensive removal of obstructions to the inner airspace surfaces, including substantial areas off-airport. This alternative provides maximum benefit to airport users and safety enhancement. Outer surfaces are protected with lighting during nighttime operations. | |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
| • Clears or lights virtually all defined aeronautical surfaces<br>• Satisfies federal design standards and assurances<br>• Comprehensive removal of potential hazards to airport users<br>• Improves safety for people and property on the ground surrounding the airport | • Potential for impacts to wetlands (temporary or permanent)<br>• Potential impacts to biological resources, habitats, or species of concern<br>• Potential impacts to historic district<br>• Substantial coordination and negotiation needed with property owners<br>• The need for numerous avigation easements may prevent successful completion of project and significantly extend the required schedule<br>• High project costs<br>• Successful completion is questionable |

### 3.1.3 Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative

The Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative is intended to eliminate the most critical obstructions while substantially reducing the number of affected properties, and therefore potential environmental impacts. To accomplish this, the planned tree removals would focus on the penetrations to a less extensive airspace surface on locations off-airport property; on-airport locations would continue to address the Part 77 Surfaces.

The FAA has recognized that full off-airport clearing of the Part 77 surfaces can be a considerable endeavor and is often impractical due to environmental impacts, costs, and property considerations. As such, the FAA Airport Design manual (Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A) has defined a different approach surface that may be used by airport sponsors to address the most critical obstructions and maintain an acceptable margin of safety.

**Sample:** Selective removal of trees to reduce impacts to sensitive properties.

For distinguishing purposes, this surface is often referred to as the Threshold Surface, as not to be confused with the Part 77 Approach Surface. The Threshold Surface is designed to protect use of the runway in both visual and instrument meteorological conditions. Like the Part 77 Approach Surface, it is trapezoidal in shape and extends outward and upward from the runway along the centerline at a specific slope. However, the Threshold Surface is generally smaller in size or steeper in slope than the Part 77 Approach Surface, which reduces the size of the clearing area. The specific size and slope depends upon the aircraft served and visibility minimums of the runway end. For Hartford-Brainard Airport, the Threshold Surface to the main runway includes a steeper 20:1 slope, which reduces the penetrations to a much smaller area compared to the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative. In total, this alternative would result in approximately 30 acres of tree removal and selective tree removal on 7 individual parcels, compared to 74 acres for the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative. This alternative also avoids tree clearing in residential areas, including Old Wethersfield.

Penetrations to the Threshold Surface are illustrated with a magenta (or pink) dots on the figures in Appendix A. As most Threshold Surface penetrations are also Approach Surface Penetrations, these obstructions include blue dots with a magenta outline.

The figures in Appendix A illustrate the Modified Removal Alternative using shading. Yellow shading includes general tree clearing areas; green shading illustrates reduced or selective tree removal of individual tree obstructions identified during the design process – selective thinning. In other words, the hatching areas (green and yellow) indicate locations of obstructions to the threshold surfaces, which would be removed under the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative. In some locations for preventative purposes, this alternative also recommends removals to some Part 77 surface penetrations as well. This selective thinning is use in locations where fewer obstructions are present and/or sensitive environmental conditions are anticipated (e.g., wetlands, streams). Similar to the other alternatives, for tree removals on private parcels, permanent 'avigation' easements are typically required.

Note that Runway ends 2, 20, and 29 all have 'displaced thresholds', meaning the landing point is displaced from the physical end of the runway. For these runways, the figures depict the Approach Surface based on the runway end, and the separate Threshold Surface based on the displaced threshold location. Runway 11 is the only runway end that does do not have a displaced threshold, and the approach surface and threshold surface start at the same location (overlay each other). For that runway the figure only illustrated one surface.

The shaded clearing areas (yellow and green) on the figures is the proposed tree removal under this alternative. Beyond the ends of Runways 2, 20, and 29, the proposed tree removal includes essentially all tall trees between the flood control levee and the Connecticut River. On the south end of the airport, the recommended tree removals terminate at Folly Brook, with no clearing recommended south or east of Interstate 91 in the Town of

Wethersfield, or in the Wethersfield Cove area. Beyond the end of Runway 11, tree removals under this alternative is limited to landscaped trees on commercial property.

As with the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative, the Modified Removal Alternative would employ the same removal methods and techniques to minimums impacts, including:

- Removal of all sizable trees, but retaining small trees and underbrush.
- Tree stumps would be left in place to minimize ground disturbance and potential erosion.
- On residential properties, removal of tall trees only, with stump grinding, top soil placement and seeding.
- Fall and/or winter removals may be employed to reduce impacts to bat and bird species, and reduce ground disturbance.
- Removals will be conducted in coordination with State and Federal regulatory agencies, and follow required techniques or procedures defined during the permitting process.

Unlike the Full Removal Alternative, the Modified Removal does not include obstruction lighting for the outer Horizontal and Conical Surface penetrations. Obstruction lighting is an added safety benefit, but requires additional property rights and access to remote locations.

The following summary box highlights potential advantages and disadvantages of the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative.

| Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative | |
|---|---|
| Goal(s): This option removes tree penetrations to the FAA Threshold Surface. | |
| Description: A reduced removal alternative intended to clear the critical penetrations to the runway approaches to maintain operational safety, while minimizing the impact to off-airport properties and the natural environment. | |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
| • Clears the critical obstructions<br>• Satisfies federal design standards and assurances<br>• Improves safety for people and property on the ground surrounding the airport<br>• Reduces impacts to environmental resources<br>• Reduces the number of affected property owners<br>• No tree removals in residential areas<br>• No tree removals in the Old Wethersfield historic district<br>• Streamlines the project schedule and reduces costs | • Potential impacts to wetland, biological, habitat, or species of concern remain present<br>• Easements are required with property owners<br>• Less critical obstructions will remain<br>• Outer Part 77 surface was not protected with obstruction lighting |

The CAA and FAA have identified this alternative as the most practical solution. This alternative balances the airport needs and safety while taking into account environmental considerations and minimizing both cost and

private property disturbance. The review considered land use, access, ownership, wetlands, and general environmental conditions.

As discussed above, detailed illustrations of the removal areas for this alternative have been prepared and are provided in Appendix A. These figures are referenced as necessary throughout the remainder of this document.

## 3.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND DISMISSED

This section includes a brief description of alternatives considered but dismissed because they were deemed infeasible.

- Removal of All Obstructions – Ideally all Part 77 obstructions would be removed, including those to the Horizontal and Conical Surfaces for the maximum safety benefit. However, due to the development surrounding the airport, private property involved, and potential environmental impacts, this alternative is not a realistic goal.

- Clear Cutting and Providing a Maintainable Surface – The two 'build' alternatives above remove tree obstructions; however, trees will eventually grow back. As an alternative, once trees are cut, the root balls could be pulled and the area graded and seeded. Thereafter the CAA would maintain the area as an open field with regular mowing or annual brush cutting. This option was eliminated from consideration as grading the tree clearing areas would have a permanent impact to any wetlands, sensitive biological habitat, and recreational areas, and archeological resources. This alternative is also extremely costly.

- Closure of Runway 11-29 – On occasions, an airport with three or more runways, may consider closure or elimination of a runway that is considered surplus or unnecessary. However, for two runway airports such as Hartford-Brainard, the closure of a runway results in the lack of a crosswind runway, or backup runway availability while the primary runway is under repair or closed for snow removal or other required maintenance activities. In 2012, the Airport evaluated the possible closure of Runway 11-29, as part of the Airport Master Plan Update. That study recommended the retention of secondary runway of safety benefits. Thus, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

- Relocation of Runways – During the recent airport master plan (2014), the potential to relocate one or both runways to reduce penetrations and other considerations was evaluated. However, there does not appear to be a shifted or reoriented runway alignment that is feasible at the airport site. In addition, the cost for a runway relocation would likely far exceeded the cost for tree clearing.

## 3.3 PROPOSED ACTION

Based on the evaluation identified in this section, and review by CAA and FAA, the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative has been chosen as the "Preferred Alternative" for Hartford-Brainard Airport. This determination is primarily related to the Full Removal Alternative being considered not practical nor feasible from an environmental and cost standpoint. The No Action Alternative is also not considered appropriate as it does not address the safety of airport users and does not satisfy FAA requirements or obligations.

The remainder of this Environmental Assessment document focuses on the evaluation of potential impacts of the Proposed Action, with tree removals illustrated by the yellow and green shading. The goal of the evaluation is to enable the FAA to determine if the impacts of the Proposed Action are substantial, or could be implemented without significant impact.

Since the DRAFT EA, modifications have been made to the Proposed Tree Removal Areas. The *Reduced Tree Removal Plan* located in Appendix A shows the current proposed tree removal areas as well as the extent of the original removal areas). The No Action Alternative was not an appropriate action, however the proposed tree removal areas were significantly reduced.

# 4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter describes the environment that may be affected by the Obstruction Removal alternatives under consideration. The information provided in this chapter serves as the basis for the assessment of potential environmental, social, and economic impacts in Chapter 5.

Throughout Chapters 4 and 5, the discussion of potential impacts is in reference to the Preferred Alternative (i.e., the Proposed Action). It is assumed that the No Action alternatives, while undesirable, does not result in significant environmental impacts. It is also assumed that the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative will have greater impacts than the Preferred Alternative due to the more extensive area of tree removal and number of affected properties. As such, the remainder of this EA is focused on the potential impacts of the Proposed Action.

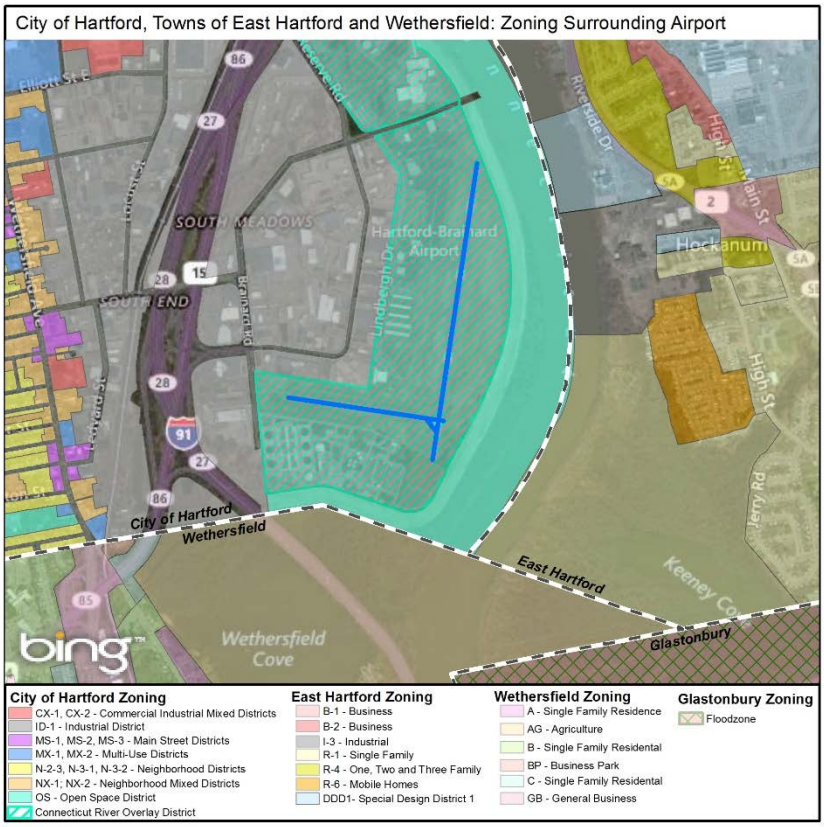
The sections below include the following:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Section 4(f) Lands
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Wetlands

HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT OVERVIEW

## 4.1 LAND USE AND ZONING

Hartford-Brainard Airport is located approximately southeast of downtown Hartford near the intersections of I-84 and I-91 within the city of Hartford. The Town of Wethersfield lies immediately to the south. Land use in the vicinity of the Airport includes commercial and industrial uses. These uses are located north and west of the Airport, along Murphy Road, Maxim Road, and Brainard Road. An open space area is located east and south of HFD, along the flood levee. Land use to the south generally includes open space. The area consists of wetland




and floodplain areas associated with the Connecticut River and Wethersfield Cove. More distant are residential areas located south and west of Wethersfield Cove.

Hartford

According to the Hartford Zoning Map, dated April 13, 2017 the Airport is zoned Industrial District (ID-1) with a Connecticut River Overlay. Properties located north of the Airport have the same zoning (ID-1 with Connecticut River Overlay) Lands to the east and adjacent to the Connecticut River are zoned Open Space (OS). Lands west of the Airport including west of I-91 are also zoned ID-1.

The purpose of the ID-1 industrial district in the city is to provide for medium to heavy industry characterized by a minimum of noise, odor, glare, and pollution, and by moderate traffic upon the public streets. It is the purpose of this district to encourage the continuance and expansion of industry of this kind and its creation, and to develop a more compatible relationship between such industry and surrounding residential areas.

The closest residential districts are approximately 4000 feet north/northwest from the end of Runway 20 along Wawarme Avenue and include N-2-2 and NX-1. The N-2 district is intended for neighborhoods that consist of House Type B Buildings only. Versions of the N-2 district allow only 1 unit, up to 2 units, or up to 3 units, defined as N-2-1, N-2-2, and N-2-3, respectively. The NX-1 district is intended for neighborhood areas that currently include a mix of Apartment Buildings and House Type B with multiple units in each building. Row Buildings are permitted, though few exist in these areas. In this location these zones are surrounded by Commercial and Industrial Zones.

Town of East Hartford

Lands east of the airport and the Connecticut River are delineated as Residential (R-1) on the Town of East Hartford Zoning Map dated March 26, 2013. Allowable uses in the (R-1) zone consist of single family homes and public parks and open space.

Wethersfield

The Wethersfield Zoning Map, dated June 2006, delineates the area south of Airport, near Wethersfield Cove and the Connecticut River as Agricultural (AG). This includes the Folly Brook Natural Area located north of Wethersfield Cove. The residential areas located south and west of Wethersfield Cove are zoned Single Family Residence (A, B, and C). Allowable uses in the AG zone are generally limited agricultural uses and structures. Allowable uses include single family residential, and open space uses in all three residential districts. A limited number of additional uses may locate within each district but require Site Plan Approval, or both a Conditional Use Permit and Special Permit.

The nearest residential areas within the Town of Wethersfield are located approximately 0.7 miles south of the southern airport boundary.

## 4.2 SECTION 4(F) LANDS

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act requires the approval of the Secretary of Transportation for any project that impacts publicly owned land such as a public park, recreation area, or wildlife refuge of national, state, or local significance or a historic site of national, state or local significance.

Folly Brook Natural Area is located south of the Airport property in the Town of Wethersfield and includes a tree removal area (Parcel 2, south of Runway 2). This area will require review by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP). Other 4(f) resources have been identified in the vicinity of the Airport however no project activities are planned in these areas.

## 4.3 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

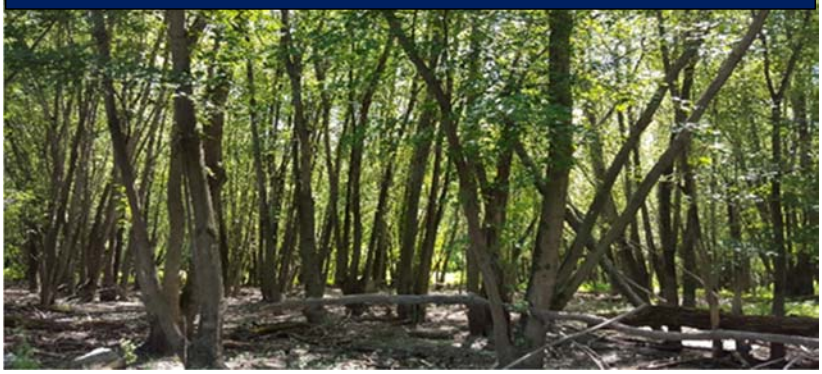
The habitat assessment for the Hartford-Brainard Airport involved agency coordination with the CTDEEP's Natural Diversity Database (NDDB), screening through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information Planning and Conservation System (IPaC), GIS screenings, and field investigations. Relevant agency coordination/correspondence is attached in Appendix C. Field investigations were carried out during the summer and fall of 2015 and winter of early 2016.

**Fish:** The major waterbody within the project area is the Connecticut River which lies adjacent to the site to the east. Wethersfield Cove, a historic river oxbow, lies adjacent to the south and is directly connected to the Connecticut River by Folly Brook. These waterbodies support both a warmwater and coldwater fishery that supports recreationally, economically, and ecologically important fish species of conservation concern. Examples include but are not limited to the Large-mouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) – a species important to recreational anglers, and a number of diadromous species ranging from the fairly abundant Alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) to the rarer Blueback Herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) and Rainbow Smelt (*Osmerus mordax*). Some of the diadromous species such as the American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*), and Short-nosed Sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) are subjected to a regional or federal conservation and management plans.

**Wildlife:** Wildlife within the project area is expected to be diverse, representative of multiple taxa, and include a number of species identified as species of "Greatest Conservation Need" by the CTDEEP in the Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan (CTDEEP, 2015). Various herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) are known or expected to occur within the project area, especially frogs and toads, and certain snakes such as Common Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*), Northern Water Snake (*Nerodia sipedon*), and Dekay's Brown Snake (*Storeria dekayi*).

A cumulative tally of bird species sightings reported to eBird by dozens of birder's over the years for Wethersfield Cove consists of 114 species. http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspot/L109163. This list includes species distributed among many taxonomic orders and families and is indicative of the species that would be expected to be found in similar habitats within the project area. It includes a variety of species considered to be of Greatest Conservation Need by the CTDEEP (2015), and a variety of migratory species whose distributional ranges overlap the project area, the protection of which falls under the jurisdiction of the USFWS. Species commonly seen on the Connecticut River include fish-eating species such as cormorants, kingfisher, and mergansers, as well as gulls, and dabbling ducks.

**Typical Silver Maple-dominated regularly flooded floodplain forest along Connecticut River at Airport. Note the lack of a well-developed shrub layer**



Songbirds are numerous along the forest/field margins, and woodpeckers frequent the tall, large-diameter floodplain trees. Shorebirds such as (Killdeer *Charadrius vociferous*) and Spotted Sandpipers (*Actitis macularius*) can be found foraging along the mudflats of the river floodplain, and more human-adapted species such as European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) and Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) are often found in the more developed commercial areas to the west of and adjacent to the airport.

The most abundant mammals observed within the project area are Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), and Eastern Chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*). Signs of White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), including scat, tracks, and browsed plant life, were also frequently noted in the floodplain forest found within the project area. Signs of Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) are evident along the Connecticut River which also likely hosts River Otter (*Lontra canadensis*), Mink (*Mustella vison*), and other mustelids. Burrows of Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*) were also encountered on or adjacent to the Airport. Other abundant mammals include Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), a variety of rodents and likely arboreal-roosting bats.

**Plants:** The dominant plant community in the project area is the seasonally saturated floodplain deciduous forest dominated by tall growing broadleaf trees. These trees often grow to form dense continuous-canopy stands or forests. Lower layers of smaller trees and shrubs are weakly developed in most interior areas of the floodplain forest yet are grow more densely along the forest-field ecotone.

The deciduous floodplain forests in the study area are composed predominantly of Silver Maples (*Acer saccharinum*) and Eastern Cottonwoods (*Populus deltoides*) Silver Maple is by far the dominant species in the tree layer, with stands of Eastern Cottonwoods having significant local coverages. Two major community types were noted. One is the Silver Maple / Smallspike False Nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*) community, and the other is the Silver Maple / Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*) community. Both are similar to the descriptions provided by Metzler and Barrett (2006). The Silver Maple / Smallspike False Nettle community occurs primarily in regularly flooded areas of the floodplain on poorly drained and very poorly drained alluvial soils. The Silver Maple / Sensitive Fern community occurs on inner floodplain areas that are above the river level and freely drain once floodwaters recede.

Non-forested habitats include marshland, grasslands, old field / early successional habitats, mowed lawn areas, and various miscellaneous ruderal habitats. These habitats, their characteristic vegetation, location in the project area, and characteristic wildlife species of conservation concern are provided in Table 7 below. Species of conservation concern are further discussed below.

**Rare Species:** A review of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping revealed a number of mapped locations of known rare species occurrence along the Connecticut River. The CTDEEP NDDB reported that the American

Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) and the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are known listed species to occur on the site. Both of these species are listed as Threatened in Connecticut by the CTDEEP (CTDEEP, 2015a).

The American Kestrel is a rare to uncommon breeder in Southern New England that continues to decline. It inhabits a wide range of habitats, but in New England prefers forested edges, grasslands, pastures, utility rights-of way, marshes, and beaver flowages. It is a rare winter resident, uncommon to fairly common spring and fall migrant, and a rare breeder (Haniseck, 2005). Its natural nest cavities are typically in trees with a diameter at breast height of >12 inches, and they require elevated perches from which to sight prey (DeGraaf and Yamasaki, 2001). This species typically passes through Connecticut on spring migration from March through late April. Some individuals remain as localized breeders in the state in areas of more open and extensive habitat. Where suitable habitat occurs (i.e., open areas where prey is in abundant supply and where appropriate nesting cavities are available) American Kestrels begin nesting in early May, with the breeding period lasting until approximately early to mid-June (Haniseck, 2005). Reported egg dates for the American Kestrel in the northeast are from April 27 to May 26.

The Bald Eagle (see photograph below) is a rare, but increasing breeder in Connecticut. In the Connecticut River Valley, it regularly occurs as a winter resident and spring migrant, and is an uncommon to fairly common fall migrant (Haniseck, 2005). Within recent years, it has become a rare but regular breeding resident in the Connecticut River Valley. Its preferred habitats include large lakes, rivers, and estuaries in open areas, forests and mountains (DeGraaf and Yamasaki, 2001). Bald Eagles and a Bald Eagle nest (See photograph below) were observed within the project area, approximately 150 feet south of the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC).This general location has been used by nesting eagles in recent previous years (Brian Hess CTDEEP Wildlife Division, personal communication).

**Bald Eagle perched in floodplain forest south of Brainard Road (Parcel 2) & ACOE Flood control dike**

**Bald Eagle nest located near Parcel 2**

The USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) Online Screening Tool was referenced to obtain information on species listed on the federal Endangered Species Act. An IPaC report generated for this project (USFWS IPaC, 2015) identified one rare mammal species - the Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) - and 16 migratory bird species with distributional ranges that included the project area. A copy of the IPaC report is provided in Appendix C.

Table 7. Existing Habitats, Associated Species of Conservation Concern and State and Federal Status

| Habitat | Characteristic Vegetation | Location in the Project Area | Species of Conservation Concern | CT Status (CTDEEP 2015a, 2015b) | Federal Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Deciduous Hardwood Upland Forest / Woodland | Red Maple, Black Birch, Quaking Aspen, Northern Red Oak | East of Runway 20, South and east of Runway 2; east of Runway 29 | Wood Thrush | GCN – Most Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Worm-eating Warbler | GCN – Very Important | Conservation Concern |
| Palustrine Emergent | Skunk Cabbage, Jewelweed, Tussock Sedge, False Nettle, Royal Fern, Cinnamon Fern, Cocklebur | Occurs as an inclusion in Parcel 2, and within drainage ditches elsewhere. | American Bittern | GCN – Very Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Least Bittern | Threatened GCN – Very Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Rusty Blackbird (fall and winter) | N/A | Conservation Concern |
| River Floodplain Forest | Silver Maple, Eastern Cottonwood, American Elm, Sycamore, Red Maple. Jewelweed, Stinging Nettle, Poison Ivy, Sensitive Fern | Parcels 1, 2 | Bald Eagle | Threatened GCN – Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Rusty Blackbird (fall and winter) | N/A | Conservation Concern |
| Shrubby margin / ecotone | Staghorn Sumac, Multiflora Rose, Wild Indigobush, various brambles often interspersed with non-native invasive shrubs. | North of Runway 2; East of Runways 2 and 20 along the field/forest ecotone of Parcels 1 and 2 | Black-billed Cuckoo | GCN – Very Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Prairie Warbler | GCN – Most Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Blue-winged Warbler | GCN – Most Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Fox Sparrow (Winter) | N/A | Conservation Concern |
| Grasslands | Little Bluestem and other warm-season grasses, interspersed with various forbs such as goldenrods, asters, Common Mullein, Evening Primrose, Bedstraw, English Plantain, Round-headed Bush-clover, Queen Anne's Lace, etc. | Airport Property fields between runways and taxiways | Upland Sandpiper (historical records) | Endangered GCN – Most Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | American Kestrel | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| | | | Peregrine Falcon | GCN – Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | Short-eared Owl | Threatened (wintering) GCN – Important | Conservation Concern |
| Miscellaneous (Ruderal) Habitats (Open lots, waste places, and other unmaintained non-forest habitats) | Lawn (turf) grasses, Sheep sorrel, cinquefoil, English Plantain, White Clover, Dandelion, various landscape plantings, naturalized & non-native, invasive weeds | Transitional surface areas south of and west of Runway 11 | American Kestrel – Connecticut Threatened | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| Connecticut River (open Water) | | River reach to the east of the Airport | Pied-billed Grebe | Endangered Most Important | Conservation Concern |

Table 7. Existing Habitats, Associated Species of Conservation Concern and State and Federal Status

| Habitat | Characteristic Vegetation | Location in the Project Area | Species of Conservation Concern | CT Status (CTDEEP 2015a, 2015b) | Federal Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Various potential submerged aquatic vegetation spp. | (Open water portions associated with Parcels 1 & 2 | Bald Eagle | Threatened GCN – Important | Conservation Concern |
| | | | American Shad | GCN – Very Important | NR |
| | | | Alewife | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| | | | Blueback Herring | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| | | | American Eel | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| | | | Rainbow Smelt | GCN – Most Important | NR |
| | | | Atlantic Salmon | GCN – Very Important | NR |

GCN = Greatest Conservation Need as identified in the draft State Wildlife Action Plan (CTDEEP, 2015b)
N/A = Not Applicable
NR = None Reported in the IPaC screening assessment

The species that have been identified by CTDEEP as being documented within the project area and any required mitigation is presented and discussed in Section 5.7 Fish, Wildlife and Plants.

## 4.4 WETLANDS

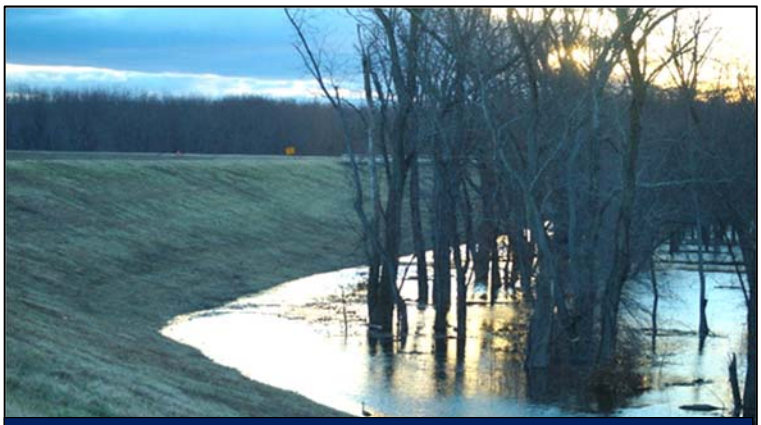
To understand the extent of wetland resources within potential obstruction removal impact areas, a review of National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps and a field investigation was conducted. The objective of the field investigation was to determine the approximate locations, extent, and connectivity of the wetlands and associated watercourses on those parcels identified for obstruction removal (tree cutting). A basic understanding of the wetlands and their position within the greater landscape helps to give a better insight into the potential habitat impacts that may occur as a result of the obstruction removal project.

While the wetlands within the project area were not formally delineated, observations made in the field by a team of wetland scientists essentially encompassed the investigation of the criteria typically required for a formal delineation. These criteria for state and federal wetlands include hydric soil conditions, hydrophytic vegetation, and evidence of hydrology. Connecticut inland wetland boundaries are determined by the limit of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial, and flood plain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey.

The Airport is situated on an expansive plain (former floodplain) in the Connecticut River Valley. The airport runways, taxiways and adjacent open fields are surrounded by a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) flood control dike that was built following the severe flooding in 1936 and 1938. The soils to the east of Runway 2/20 are mapped as a unit of the Winooski series, which are moderately well-drained soils of alluvial origin and thus considered state jurisdictional wetlands. Riverward of the dike, riparian forest occurs to the east and south, along the Connecticut River, and contains remnant floodplain areas. These areas are underlain predominantly by Winooksi, Limerick, and Lim soils – all soils of alluvial origin and thus regulated as state jurisdictional wetlands, but only the areas underlain by Limerick and Lim soils are poorly drained and thus considered hydric. Therefore, areas underlain by Limerick and Lim soils likely contain wetlands subject to both state AND federal jurisdictions.

Further to the south lies Folly Brook – a watercourse that connects the Connecticut River to Wethersfield Cove. Wethersfield Cove is a large open water resource that has formed in the oxbow of an historical Connecticut River channel. The forested area along the north side of Folly Brook and Wethersfield Cove is a city-owned natural area.

In general, the forested wetlands east and south of the dike and to the east across the Connecticut River are dominated by Silver Maples in the tree layer, with Eastern Cottonwood, Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), and Basswood (*Tilia americana*) having significant coverages locally. The shrub layer below the closed canopy of the riparian forest is sparse to non-existent in most areas except at the forest edges where Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) and False Indigo (*Amorpha fruiticosa*) are common in the uplands and willow and elderberry occur in the wetland areas. Large stands of Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), False Nettle, and Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) were noted as having significant coverages in the herbaceous layer with Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), Cocklebur (Xanthium strumarium), and White Grass (*Leersia virginica*) also present. Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) is dominant in the liana layer.



**Floodplain forest of Folly Brook Natural Area south of Airport and ACOE Flood Control Dike**

Just south of Runway 2 are two open detention basins that appear to be used for stormwater management. Other small vegetated wetland/watercourse resource areas exist to the west of the commercial properties along Brainard Road. Many of these resource areas serve as stormwater drainage channels. The majority of these resources areas are dominated by *Phragmites* with some areas shaded by mature trees such as willow, Basswood, and Silver Maple.

Table 8 National Wetlands Inventory Wetland Cover Types on and adjacent to Hartford -Brainard Airport

| Wetlands Cover Types and NWI Classification | Location | Major Wetland Plant Associations / Types |
|---|---|---|
| Palustrine Emergent Marsh (PEM) | South of Runway 2 (occurs as an inclusion within Parcel 2) | Herbaceous emergent non-persistent hydrophytes |
| Palustrine Forested Wetlands (PFO) – Silver Maple Floodplain Forest | Parcels 1, 2 | Silver Maple, Eastern Cottonwood, Pin Oak, Smallspike, Sensitive Fern, Stinging Nettle, Cinnamon Fern |
| Connecticut River (R2UBHh) | East of Runways 2, 20, 29 | Riparian zone trees such as American Sycamore, Eastern Cottonwood |

Within the designated obstruction removal limits, additional private parcels have been identified as having potential for wetland impacts associated with this project. Much of the approach surface areas immediately east of Runways 20 and 29 (Parcel 1) and south of Runway 2 (Parcel 2) exist as forested river floodplain where selective tree removal of approach surface obstructions is proposed.

# 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter describes the potential environmental, social, and economic impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative (i.e. Proposed Action). The analysis in this chapter was conducted in accordance with FAA Order 5050.4B "*National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions,*" FAA Order 1050.1E "*Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*," and applicable federal and state environmental regulations. Based on the information in this chapter, coordination with federal and state agencies, and review of public comments, the FAA will determine if the Preferred Alternative would involve significant impacts. The FAA will also ensure that the document presents a full, accurate, and fair assessment of the environmental consequences of the proposed action.

Consistent with the FAA Orders 5050.4B and 1050.1E the following impact categories are addressed:

- Air Quality
- Coastal Resources
- Compatible Land Use
- Construction Impacts
- Department of Transportation Act: Section 4(f)
- Farmland
- Fish, Wildlife, and Plants
- Floodplains
- Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste
- Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources
- Light Emissions and Visual
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Noise
- Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice, and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks
- Water Quality
- Wetlands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

Anticipated permit requirements and a potential impact summary are provided at the end of the chapter.

## 5.1 AIR QUALITY

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 authorized the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish standards, known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), which are considered harmful to the public and the environment.

The Clean Air Act established two national air quality standards, including Primary and Secondary Standards. Primary Standards were established to set limits on harmful pollutants to protect the public and sensitive receptors (asthmatics, children and the elderly). Secondary Standards were set to protect the public welfare by accounting for the effects of air pollution on the public welfare, which includes protection against impaired visibility, damage to animals, soil, vegetation, crops, buildings, and other aspects of the general welfare.

The EPA has established NAAQS for the following six "criteria air pollutants" in order to protect the health and welfare of the general public. These pollutants are listed below.

- Ozone ($O_3$)
- Carbon monoxide (CO)
- Particulates (PM-10 and PM 2.5)
- Sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$)
- Nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$)
- Lead (Pb)

According to the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CTDEEP), Hartford County is currently in attainment for all criteria air pollutants with the exception of 8-hour Ozone. Hartford County is part of the 5-county Greater Connecticut Area and is classified as a marginal Nonattainment Area and subject to planning and emission reduction requirements as specified in the Clean Air Act.

Section 176(c) of the CAA as amended in 1990, requires that Federal actions conform to the appropriate Federal or State air quality plans in order to attain the CAA's air quality goals.
Conformity is defined as conformity to the implementation plan's purpose of eliminate of recusing the severity and number of violations of the NAAQS and achieving expeditious attainment of such standards, and that such Federal activities will not:

(1) Cause of contribute to any new violation of any standard in any area
(2) Increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any standard in any area
(3) Delay timely attainment of any standard of any required interim emission reductions or other milestones in any area.[1]

The obstruction removal will improve safety, but will not change the operating characteristics of the airport. There will be no changes in activity levels, aircraft types or other facilities and as such there will be no changes in air quality as a result of this work. No impacts are anticipated and therefor no further evaluation is be needed.

In regards to public health resulting from the removal of trees, unlike a construction or development project, no additional impervious surfaces are being introduced, and no activities are planned within the removal area. The removal of trees has some effect on carbon dioxide and oxygen levels (measureable or otherwise), however the proposed action does not remove all trees; the remaining trees as well as underbrush will remain and continue to grow. As the project will not change airport activity or airport facilities, it does not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. As the area will remain open and vegetated, the FAA does not consider the tree obstruction removals to be substantial enough to impact air quality or area residents. As such, based on federal standards and practices, significant air quality and health impacts are not anticipated from this project.

## 5.2 COASTAL RESOURCES

The CTDEEP administers the Connecticut Coastal Management Program, enacted in 1980 to protect coastal resources, including restoration of coastal habitat, improve public access, promote harbor management, and regulate work within tidal, coastal and navigable waters.

The Airport is not situated within a designated Coastal Zone, and therefore there will be no impact to designated coastal areas as a result of the Preferred Alternative. As a result, no additional evaluation is necessary.

[1] U.S. Department of Transportation, FAA Order 1050.1E, Appendix A, Section 2.1f

## 5.3 COMPATIBLE LAND USE

Hartford-Brainard Airport is zoned Industrial ID-1 and is overlain by the Connecticut River Overlay District. Lands to the west of Airport and I-91 are also zoned ID-1. Within the City of Hartford, the Airport is generally surrounded by the ID-1 zone including the Overlay District. North of the airport are pockets of mixed Industrial districts (CX-1), Neighborhood (N-2-2) and Neighborhood Mix Districts (NX-1). South of the Airport and Runway 2 in the Town of Wethersfield lands are zoned Agriculture (AG).

**Runway 2 Approach**
General land use consists within the approach includes forested undeveloped area of Folly Brook Natural Area. East of the Airport and the Connecticut River in the Town of East Hartford lands are also undeveloped and forested. Parcel 1 is an undeveloped, forested parcel located on the banks of the Connecticut River. Parcel 2 is also undeveloped and forested and is part of the Folly Brook Natural Area. The removal of trees on this undeveloped, forested parcel will not impact land use or zoning in the area.

**Runway 11 Approach**
Lands at the end of Runway 11 are generally developed for commercial and business uses and also include I-91, and Routes 5 and 15. Parcels 7 and 8 are identified for the selective removal of trees and are in commercial use. Therefore the selective removal of potential obstructions will not impact land use or zoning in this area.

**Runway 20 Approach**
Lands within the Runway 20 approach include cleared and forested areas on the south bank of the Connecticut River. Affected Parcel number 1 includes the both the removal and selective removal of trees in an undeveloped area on the banks of the Connecticut River. The removal of trees will not impact land use or zoning in this area.

**Runway 29 Approach**
Land use within the Runway 29 approach consists of undeveloped forested areas on the west banks of the Connecticut River at the end of Runway 29. This area of Parcel 1 has been identified for the removal of trees. The removal of these obstructions will have no impact on zoning or land use in the area.

Overall the project does not alter airport operations or flight patterns and therefor will not have any impacts on adjacent land use or zoning.

## 5.4 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Potential impacts from the removal of trees are not expected to be significant. Tree removal or installation activities may produce temporary environmental disturbances, such as noise from equipment, air quality impacts from dust, minor soil erosion and sedimentation, and minor disruption of local traffic patterns. These impacts can be mitigated through careful planning and consideration, as well as quality construction supervision.

Obstruction removal for Runways will occur in both undeveloped and developed areas. The areas identified for removal and selective removal associated with Runways 2, 20 and 29 (Parcels 1 and 2) approaches are forested. The selective removal area associated with the Runway 11 approach includes commercial development (Parcels 7 and 8).

5.4.1 Construction Noise

As with any construction project, the use of construction equipment and construction traffic will temporarily generates noise. All construction equipment and vehicles will be properly maintained and tuned to minimize the potential for noise. Upon project completion, ambient noise levels will return to pre-existing conditions.

5.4.2 Air Quality

Air quality impacts during construction would be limited to short-term increases in fugitive dust, particulates, and localized pollutant emissions from construction vehicles and equipment during tree removal. As stated above, all construction equipment should be properly maintained and outfitted with emission reducing exhaust equipment. The work involves the selective removing of trees that have been identified as obstructions; other vegetation and ground covers will not be removed, protecting the soil from erosion and thereby limiting the potential for increases in fugitive dust. Adherence to the soil and erosion control plan as required in the Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan (SWPPP) will further mitigate any potential impacts.

5.4.3 Sedimentation & Erosion

The potential for erosion during the selective removal of obstructions is minimal as all remaining vegetation and ground covers will remain and no new impervious surfaces will be created as part of construction operations. Adherence to the soil and erosion control plan as required in the SWPPP will further mitigate any potential impacts.

5.4.4 Traffic

Construction vehicles will enter and exit local roads throughout the duration of construction. Impacts to traffic patterns will be limited as all construction activities will be performed beyond the limits of the public roadways. In order to limit impacts related to construction impacts the community will be notified of the start date of this project and alert them to potential construction traffic.

## 5.5 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACT: SECTION 4(f) LANDS CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 states that the Federal Highway Administration and other DOT agencies cannot approve any program or project that requires the use of land from publicly owned recreation areas, parks, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites unless there is a determination that there is no feasible and prudent alternative, or the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use.

One such Section 4(f) property, the Folly Brook Natural Area, is located within the tree removal area of the proposed action (also referred to as the Folly Brook Nature Conservancy in the legal description of the subject easement). The Folly Brook Natural Area is located south of Runway 2, in the location between the Connecticut River and Bakers Cove, and was designated to protect the ecological, scientific, educational, and aesthetic value of the area in its present state, and to protect against development and exploitation.

The proposed tree removal includes a portion of this area (Parcel 2, south of Runway 2), which is necessary to protect the Threshold Surface of the runway. Tree removal has occurred within Folly Brook Natural Area in the past by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, but tree regrowth in the past 15-20 years now once again requires removals to protect airport operational safety. This subject parcel is located within the Town of Wethersfield, but is owned by the City of Hartford.

The Folly Brook Natural Area was formally established in 1989, through a conservation easement:

The **Conservation Easement** (1989 to 2039):
A 50-year easement granted by the City of Hartford, the property owner, to The Nature Conservancy of Connecticut, Inc., and filed in the Wethersfield land records. The easements is for the preservation and protection of this natural area, but includes the requirement to establish a tree clearing plan to protect the airspace of the Hartford-Brainard Airport. The required maintenance plan was executed the following year in 1990.

In addition to the easement, this City property also contains an Airport Approach Plan Deed Restriction, which prevents the City from allowing trees to grow above the elevations of the FAA designated approach surface. The tree maintenance plan is consistent with the deed restriction.

**Tree Maintenance Plan (1990):**
A legal agreement between City of Hartford and The Nature Conservancy of Connecticut, Inc. is in effect until the Conservation Easement expires in 2039 (or is extended by both parties). The tree maintenance plan is intended to restrict tree heights to federal airspace limits. The plan includes the location of the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) (formally the Clear Zone) and the transitional area west of the RPZ. Four areas are listed in the tree maintenance plan:

- Area A- No restriction of tree clearing
- Area B- Tree clearing as needed on a rotational basis (not all at once)
- Areas C & D- Tree clearing limited to identified obstructions or hazards

For consistency with the Conservation Easement, the proposed action would follow the requirements of the Tree Maintenance Plan, which are generally consistent with the proposed selective removal. As the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) is not party to the tree maintenance plan, coordination will be required with the City of Hartford. With approval, the CAA would function as a proxy for the City, and coordinate tree removal with The Conservancy, as well as obtain any required state and federal permits.

It is anticipated that the CAA can develop a compatible tree removal approach acceptable to the City and The Conservancy, and enable completion of the removal operations in the Folly Brook Natural Area. The removals will not change the purpose, use, or access to the natural area and does not include development activities. As small trees and undergrowth would again be retained, tree cover will be reduced, but no 4(f) activity will be prevented from the designated area. Therefore this project should have no significant effect on 4(f) lands.

The remaining recommended tree removal areas at Hartford-Brainard Airport are not located within parks, wildlife and waterfowl refuges.

## 5.6 FARMLAND

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established guidelines under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) for federal activities that involve directly undertaking, financing, or approving a project that would impact farmland soils. The guidelines recognize that the quality of farmland varies based on soil conditions, and places higher value on soils with high productivity potential. To preserve these highly productive soils, the NRCS classifies soil types as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or unique farmland. The NRCS requires that soils in these categories be given proper consideration before they are converted to non-farming uses by federal programs. The NRCS policy and procedures on prime and unique farmland are published in the Federal Register (Volume 43, No. 21, January 31, 1978).

According to Web Soil Survey from the NRCS, the following soil types identified as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance are mapped in the vicinity of the affected parcels.
Prime Farmland:

- Winooski Silt Loam, 0-3% slopes (106)

Farmland of Statewide Importance:

- Limerick and Lim Soils, 0-3% slopes (107)

These soils are located in forested or commercially developed areas and are not in agricultural use.
The implementation of the appropriate soil erosion controls mitigates the potential for impacts to farmland soils from tree removal activities. The tree removal locations do not do not contain any active farmland areas and therefore no adverse effects or significant impacts are expected to occur. Furthermore, the project does not include any development activities, new impervious areas, or acquisition of property.

## 5.7 FISH, WILDLIFE, and PLANTS

Floodplain forested habitat would be directly impacted by the proposed tree clearing activity (See discussion of Forest Wetland habitat in Section 5.17 below). Forest or woodland areas of various size could be impacted by individual tree cutting, stand cutting, or clear cutting on a portion of the existing forest block. Un-fragmented forest cover typically provides habitat for successful breeding populations of "area-sensitive" species. Generally speaking, clear-cutting and other timber treatments that would result in the disruption of contiguous canopy coverage in these habitats may render such habitat unsuitable for those species, many of which are species of state and federal conservation concern. Avifauna are the most prevalent group of vertebrate wildlife occurring in the obstruction removal areas, with some species requiring large tracks of undisturbed forest for successful breeding.

Un-fragmented forest blocks larger than 500 acres generally have higher success rates than do the smaller blocks for forest interior breeding species. These large forested habitat blocks tend to have higher successful breeding rates of forest interior avifaunal populations and are also important for other larger vertebrate organisms as well. Habitat blocks between 125 and 500 acres in size are considered to have less but still fair to important value for forest interior avifauna, especially if the surrounding landscape is not intensely developed. Forest blocks smaller than 125 acres can be considered to have poor to fair value for supporting populations of forest interior species. At a size of approximately 80 acres, much of which exists as a linear riparian fringe along the bank of the Connecticut River, the floodplain forest adjacent to Hartford-Brainard Airport (and east of Runways 2 and 20) is not likely to be high value to forest interior breeding bird species. The forested banks of the Connecticut River do, however, have significance as a major migratory habitat corridor for neotropical songbird and other forest birds during northbound (spring) and southbound (autumn) movements.

A preliminary estimate of impact to contiguous canopy coverage (either through potential clear cut or patch cut treatments) within existing forest habitat blocks at each runway end as a result of the proposed action is as follows:

- Runway 2 – Approximately 20 acres of tree removal from within the Threshold Surface and Approach Surface Areas and additional selective removal in the Transitional Surface Area. All from within the adjacent 80 acre floodplain forest.
- Runway 20 – Approximately 7 acres of tree removal from within the Threshold Surface and Approach Surface Areas and an additional selective removal in the Transitional Surface Area. All from within the adjacent 80 acre floodplain forest
- Runway 11 – A few scatted tree removals from adjacent commercial properties
- Runway 29 – Three acres of tree removal and selective tree removal from within the Threshold Surface Area, Approach Surface Areas, and the Transitional Surface Area within the adjacent 80 acre floodplain forest adjacent to the dike.

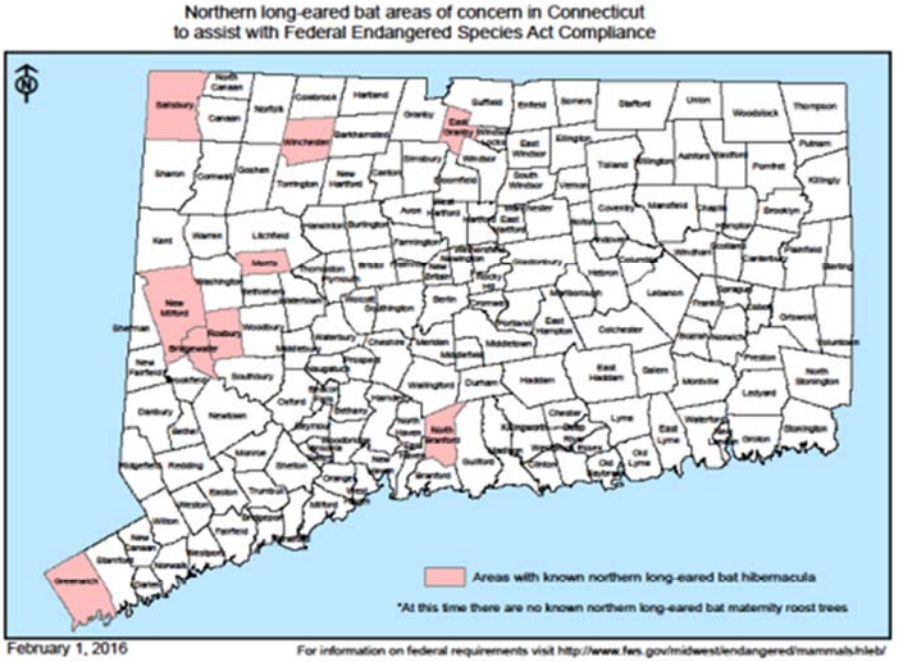
Regardless of the limited value of the forests to interior avifauna, the forested habitat blocks at Hartford-Brainard Airport that lie within the obstruction removal areas do provide wildlife habitat to edge species and species that do not require large contiguous tracts of forest interior (habitat "generalists"). These forest blocks also serve other ecological functions and values as well, which may include but may not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Soil generation
- Soil and bank stabilization
- Temperature moderation
- Wind reduction
- Water retention
- Nutrient and production export
- Noise mitigation
- Pollution retention
- Aesthetic value

The loss of a majority of these forest ecological functions and values would be avoided or minimized by employing best management practices (BMPs) for tree cutting, by adhering to seasonal restrictions, and by felling timber in place with no or minimal harvest. No large-scale clearing or grubbing across the entire obstruction removal area is included as part of the proposed action. Therefore, soil stabilization is not expected to be a major issue as large areas of bare soil will not be generated and exposed to the erosive forces of wind and water. Implementation of erosion and sedimentation control BMP's would further reduce the risk of soil loss from the occasional areas where limited amounts of soil disturbance might occur from equipment access.

Removal of the mature tree cover from within the obstruction removal areas at Hartford-Brainard Airport in the manner discussed above would actually serve to improve the habitat for certain species of conservation concern identified by the CTDEEP and USFWS as having potential to occur within the project area. They include species known to require shrubland or emergent marsh habitats (e.g., Least and American Bitterns, Pied-billed Grebe) and therefore, forest interiors do not meet their habitat requirements. Upland species that would benefit from mature tree canopy removal and the subsequent and expected development of a robust shrub layer include the American Kestrel, Black-billed Cuckoo, Prairie Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, and Fox Sparrow. Wetland species that would utilize enhanced shrub cover within a palustrine system include the Rusty Blackbird and Canada Warbler.

The IPaC report also identified the Northern Long-eared Bat as having a distributional range that includes the project area. Tree clearing in general within the range of the Northern Long-eared Bat is a potential concern for the conservation of this species. However, pursuant to the Final 4(d) Special Rule under authority of the Endangered Species Act, the USFWS would not require surveys to determine the presence of Northern Long-eared Bat if the project site does not occur within a ¼ mile from a known hibernaculum or contain a maternity roost site. The USFWS defers to the state wildlife resource agencies for information on hibernacula and maternity site locations. The CTDEEP NDDB did not identify Northern Long-eared Bat as occurring within the project area. Based upon this information, it can be concluded that the proposed action would result in "not likely to effect" the Northern Long-eared Bat. The sponsoring federal agency must request USFWS concurrence with this conclusion via a hard copy letter for documentation to accompany subsequent project permit applications.




**Known Locations of Northern Long-eared Bat Hibernacula in CT**

(from CTDEEP accessed July 12, 2016 via www at:
http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/endangered_species/images/nleb_approved2_16.pdf)

Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagles Protection Act, any activity which results in the "take" of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the USFWS. According to the USFWS IPaC report generated for the project area, there are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured. Therefore, the federal agency responsible for the proposed action must analyze potential impacts to these bird species and implement appropriate conservation measures for all project activities. However the Proposed Action is not likely to have any negative effects on the relevant species identified by the USFWS if work is conducted outside the breeding season. Since the breeding season for the Bald Eagle is known to be as early in the calendar year as February, additional measures pursuant to federal guidelines for the protection of eagles would likely be warranted.

A typical requisite measure pursuant to these guidelines is to maintain a 660 foot no disturbance zone around active nesting eagles. Delineating protection zones around areas of high eagle use are highly recommended, although eagles are somewhat tolerant of human disturbance, they may be negatively affected if work is too close to a nest or roosting site. The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) typically recommends the following:

**February 1st through August 1st (bald eagle breeding season)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around any nest site.
- If a bald eagle is found to be nesting on or within 660' of the project area, work shall be halted immediately until after the breeding season.

**December 31st through March 1st (wintering bald eagles)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around areas of high eagle use, particularly winter roosting sites."

It is recommended that CAA hire a qualified ornithologist to conduct surveys in the wooded areas at the end of Runways 2, 20 and 29 and develop a protection plan. The results of the surveys and the plan should be forwarded to the NDDB for their review. With the above mitigation measures enacted, no takes of these species are anticipated.

**Conclusion:** Direct impacts to forest/woodland dependent species of conservation concern identified by state and federal personnel can likely be avoided through restriction of tree removal activities to seasonal periods when these species are not present. In order to remove trees during the breeding season, a biological survey would likely be needed to ascertain the forest/woodland dependent species (e.g., Wood Thrush and Worm-eating Warbler) that may occur within the forest blocks subject to tree cutting. The parcels of issue include Parcels 1 and 2. The goal of a biological survey would be to assess the potential presence of the forest conservation concern and listed species on those parcels during the breeding season. If those species were found, then follow-on agency consultation may be required to address impact to the habitats of these species, and mitigation may be required.

As this process can be time consuming, CAA's preferred approach will include tree removal during early winter conditions, avoiding the plant growing and migratory bird breeding season. As discussed, under the wetland evaluation, winter cutting is the preferred approach to minimize potential impacts, and will be employed by CAA. Based on other airport obstruction removal projects, direct impact to these species may be avoided via use of seasonal restrictions (e.g., no tree cutting from May through August when these species are known to breed in New England), or in the case of nesting Bald Eagles, no cutting within 660 feet of an active eagle nest. As such, significant impacts to critical species is not anticipated. This conclusion will be reviewed by USFWS and CT DEEP to determine if biological surveys and potential mitigation are necessary

## 5.8 FLOODPLAINS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that depict 100-year and 500-year floodplains in many areas throughout the country. A 100-year floodplain is an area that has a 1% chance of being flooded in any given year (Zone A). A 500-year floodplain is an area that has a 0.2% chance of being flooded in a given year (Zone B).

According to the applicable FIRM (Community Panel 09003C0507G) all of the Airport is located in Zone AE (100-year floodplain). Affected parcels associated with Runway 2 (Parcels 1 and 2) are mapped in the 100-year flood plain with the exception of a very small area that falls in the 500- year flood plain. Affected parcels associated with Runway 20 (Parcel 1) and Runway 29 (Parcel 1) are both mapped in the 100-year floodplain.

Tree removal does not impact flood levels however it has potential to increase runoff rates. In this instance the potential for erosion during the selective removal of these obstructions is minimal as all remaining vegetation and ground covers will remain and no new impervious surfaces will be created as part of construction operations. Adherence to the soil and erosion control plan as required in the SWPPP will further mitigate any potential impacts.

## 5.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, POLLUTION PREVENTION, AND SOLID WASTE

The scope of this task consisted of a database review of the relevant State and Federal environmental regulatory agency records and a visual field inspection for potential hazardous materials located within the project areas. Tree clearing activities do not create hazardous materials concerns in and of themselves; however it is important to identify any potential hazardous materials in the clearing areas and access routes which may be encountered during clearing activities and require specialized management. A more detailed Environmental Site Assessment would be conducted should hazardous materials be observed and/or encountered.

### 5.9.1 Database Review

The database review consisted of a search for records in the applicable State and Federal environmental regulatory agency records for each property located in the tree clearing areas. Special attention was given to those databases for hazardous materials spills and dumping, as these are the most likely to impact tree clearing activities.

None of the identified properties where tree removal activities are to take place were listed by any of the regulatory agency databases reviewed for this task.

### 5.9.2 Field Inspection

The field inspection was conducted on July 30, 2015 and consisted of a detailed visual inspection of the areas of concern. During the field inspection, CHA personnel were met by Mr. Bob Nogas of the CAA. Information pertaining to the history and past uses of the areas of concern is incorporated in the summary below.

On-site Tree Clearing Areas

The only area on airport property slated for tree removal activities is a small area north of Runway 20. No hazardous materials were observed in this area.

Off-site Tree Clearing Areas

A small area west of Runway 11 is slated for selective tree removal activities. There were no hazardous materials observed in this area.

There is an extensive area between the flood dyke and the Connecticut River which is slated for tree removal activities. This area will have both selective and complete tree removal. It extends from north of Runway 20 along the east side of the airport to the areas south of Runway 2. Due to its proximity to the river, small amounts of debris were noted, likely washed up during flooding of the river. No hazardous materials were observed in this area.

There is a small area slated for selective tree removal located across the Connecticut River, south of the airport. Minor amounts of household debris were observed in this area. No hazardous materials were observed in this area.

Summary

No potential hazardous materials or concerns were identified by the regulatory database review. No hazardous materials were observed during the visual inspection. In summary, at this time, there are no known hazardous materials in the areas of concern at the Hartford-Brainard Airport.

It should be noted that the database searches can only reveal reported hazardous materials concerns. Unreported spills or dumping of hazardous materials will not appear in these database searches. The visual field inspection was somewhat limited due to the large areas involved and the dense undergrowth encountered in some locations. Additionally, only hazardous materials present at the areas of concern at the time of the site inspection (July 30, 2015) are discussed in this report. Future dumping of hazardous materials at these sites may occur and care should be exercised if unidentified potential hazardous materials are encountered during tree clearing operations.

## 5.10 HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHEOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to review the potential effects of a proposed project on cultural resources. Through consultation, agencies identify historic properties within or adjacent to the project area and find ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate the potential effects on the identified resource while accommodating the proposed project.

Tree removal will generally include clearing without grubbing. The Proposed Action does not include impacts or removal of any buildings or structures. Access would be provided by unimproved routes without grading or paving. It is anticipated that no significant soil disturbance will occur and as a result impacts to cultural resources will be avoided.

To confirm this, correspondence describing the project including mapping of potential affected parcels was submitted to the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review. Their review indicated that although there are archeological sites or historic resources in close proximity of affected parcels, SHPO recognizes that tree removal can be accomplished with minimal ground disturbance without clearing and grubbing (Appendix B).

The tree removal areas of the proposed action remain northeast of Interstate 91 and Wethersfield Cove, and thus do not impact the Old Wethersfield Historic District or any historic structures.

## 5.11 LIGHT EMISSIONS AND VISUAL

### 5.11.1 Light Emissions

The removal of tree obstructions will not result in light emissions. All tree removal operations will take place during daylight hours therefore no impacts related to light emissions are anticipated.

### 5.11.2 Visual Impacts

Tree obstructions to be removed or selectively thinned have been identified in the following locations in the vicinity of residential properties:

**Runway 2 Approach**

There affected parcel associated with Runway 2 are undeveloped, wooded parcels. There are no nearby residential parcels or uses and as such no views from residences will be impacted.

**Runway 11 Approach**

This selective removal area is located immediately adjacent to Brainard Road on the Best Western Inn and Suites parcel. Surrounding uses are also commercial; no residential uses are in this area located between Routes 5 and 15 and Brainard Road and as a result no visual impacts to residences were identified.

**Runway 20 Approach**
No residential uses are located on or adjacent of the affected parcel at the end of Runway 20. The closest residential uses are on the opposite side of the Connecticut River and I-91. No visual impacts to residences were identified.

**Runway 29 Approach**
This tree removal area consists of an undeveloped, wooded parcel that borders the Connecticut River. The closest residential area is on the opposite side of the Connecticut River and is further screened by undeveloped wooded areas. No visual impacts to residences were identified.

## 5.12 NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY SUPPLY

Energy demands associated with the proposed project is expected to be minimal as an increase in the demand for energy supplies will only occur during construction and will be limited to transportation and construction vehicles and equipment This will not impact local or regional supplies.

## 5.13 NOISE

The preferred alternative includes the selective removal of obstructions (trees) within the project area. During this removal it is possible that some nearby residents will experience short-term noise resulting from the removal activities. The preferred alternative will not affect airport activity levels. As such, the project has no influence on overall aircraft generated noise.

Selective removal of trees is planned northwest of Runway 15 on Parcel 22 which appears to include a residence as well as a greenhouse operation. Trees removal has no impact on noise from overflights and as a result the selective removal of trees will not result in an increase in noise emissions after the clearing is completed.

## 5.14 SOCIOECONOMIC ISSUES

### 5.14.1 Social

Social impacts can consist of a wide range of considerations as discussed below. The social and economic concerns are always specific to the proposed action, and may include impacts such as include displacement of residents, neighborhood disruption, tax base reduction, changes in school population, public services and other community concerns.

Socioeconomic impacts are typically defined as disruptions to surrounding communities, such as shifts in patterns of population movement and growth, changes in public service demands, loss of tax revenue, and changes in employment and economic activity stemming from airport development. These impacts may result from the closure of roads, increased traffic congestion, acquisition of business districts or neighborhoods, and/or by disproportionately affecting low income or minority populations.

There will be no acquisition of land, displacement of any populations or neighborhood disruption as a result of this project. Property values will not be significantly impacted by selective removal of obstructions; therefore there will be no impact on the tax base or tax revenue of any sector. With no displacement/impact to populations there will be no impact to school populations.

Obstruction removal in no way effects the delivery of existing or future public service. The only effect of the obstruction removal is to increase the safety of airport operations; decreasing the risk of aircraft incidents thereby

decreasing the possibility of loss of property or human capital. This also applies to children's environmental health and safety risks which may be associated with the pollution of air, food, water, recreational waters, soil, or products that a child is likely to be exposed to. The proposed project does not have the potential for significant impacts to this or for any population category.

### 5.14.2 Environmental Justice

In regards to civil rights and environmental justice, the EPA defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Title VI was enacted as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect against discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance[2]. To prevent further such occurrences, Executive Order 12898 *"Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"* was authorized in 1994.

The city of Hartford is included on the 2015 CT Department of Economic and Community Development list of distressed communities. As the purposed of the project is to remove obstructions in order to improve safety for aircraft as well as the surrounding areas. Based on the type of project under consideration, this will not result in a disproportionate impact to this population; the only impact to the surrounding neighborhood will be reduced risk of aircraft incidents. As a result there are no impacts to low income or minority populations.

### 5.14.3 Children's Health and Safety Risks

The proposed project will not result in environmental health risks and safety risks. The proposed project will not create or make more readily available products or substances that contact or ingestions through air, food, drinking water, recreational waters, or soil could harm children and therefore will not result in any significant impacts to children's health or safety.

## 5.15 SOLID WASTE

Tree removal activities on affected parcels will be conducted by a licensed and insured tree removal contractor. With the exception of limited vegetative matter that may be spread on site for decomposition, all materials, such as salvageable timber (lumber), firewood, and woodchips for landscaping or pellets will be recycled. These materials will be removed from the site by the contractor. If prescribed by agreement with property owners, logs and other materials may be left on site for use by the owner, in an approved means described in writing. As such, no solid waste impacts are anticipated.

The Connecticut DEEP has requested that commercially viable cut materials from State property be transported to the Portland Depot, a State designated mill. The transportation of these cut materials to a State designated mill for harvesting is an acceptable practice under FAA funded project, where a formal program has been established and transportation distances/costs are reasonable. The FAA does not have a defined maximum distance for transportation of cut logs or materials; however, at under 20miles from the Airport, it is assumed that the distance to the Portland Depot is reasonable.

Wood chips will not be spread in areas of floodplains or wetlands, or other areas prohibited by permits. It is anticipated the cut materials and wood chips will be removed from the project site for proper disposal.

[2] Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq, United States Department of Justice

## 5.16 WATER QUALITY

### 5.16.1 Ground Water

The CTDEEP classifies types of groundwater along with their respective designated uses. Groundwater in the vicinity of the Hartford-Brainard airport is designated by the CTDEEP as Class GB. Class GB groundwater is found in areas with a long history of urban or industrial activity. These areas are served by public water supply systems. Groundwater with this designation is presumed not suitable for human consumption without treatment.

According to the Connecticut Environmental Conditions Online Mapping (CTECO), the project area is not located within an aquifer protection area. Tree removal projects do not produce wastewater or effluent, and thus do not generally impact ground water.

### 5.16.2 Surface Water

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Connecticut General Statutes establish water quality standards for all surface waters of the state. Surface waters near the Airport include the Connecticut River, Wethersfield Cove, and Folly Brook which are designated Class SB (coastal or marine) surface waters. Class SB designated water uses Designated uses include marine fish, shellfish and wildlife habitat, shellfish harvesting for transfer to approved areas for purification prior to human consumption, recreation, industrial and other legitimate uses including navigation.

There will be no increase in total impervious surface resulting from the removal of trees and therefore no significant changes in drainage patterns or flow rates are expected and as a result no permanent stormwater management systems are will be constructed.

## 5.17 WETLANDS

Palustrine forested (PFO) wetlands are the dominant wetland cover type within the obstruction removal areas. In some areas, the canopy of these PFO wetlands is contiguous. In other areas, the PFO is interspersed with scrub/shrub dominated wetlands, emergent inclusions, or open water areas. Regardless, removal of the canopy layer would impact mainly PFO wetland cover types as tree removal work would not be required in palustrine emergent (PEM) palustrine scrub/shrub (PSS) or palustrine open water (POW) areas.

Thus, PFO wetlands within poorly-drained floodplain soils would become Palustrine Scrub/Shrub (PSS) wetlands as the understory layer that is currently being shaded would be released when exposed to more sunlight once the tall trees are removed. Existing sapling hydrophytes would eventually grow to form a woody overstory canopy over time (if periodic maintenance is not conducted). Since a tall overstory layer is produced by succession over time, the loss of the overstory tree layer cannot realistically be immediately replaced through wetland enhancement or mitigation measures.

However, there are a number of reasons why impact to palustrine wetlands are not expected to be significant. They include the following:

1) The primary wetland functions would not change. The Palustrine wetlands would still provide sediment retention, bank stabilization, nutrient retention/transformation, pollution retention/ transformation, production export, groundwater recharge/discharge, and wildlife habitat, as only the tree layer would be substantially reduced.

2) Wildlife habitat function for certain species of conservation concern reported to occur within or proximate to project area could potentially improve (e.g., Least and American Bitterns, Pied-billed Grebe).
3) An increase in the understory of water-loving shrubs would increase the diversity of nectar, pollen, and soft mast-producing plants as they responded to better sunlight conditions reaching the lower vegetation strata. Examples of native shrubs that may respond to increased light at this location include Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), Northern Arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*), Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*), and various dogwoods. This would increase the diversity of production export from the wetland and benefit many species of small mammals, migratory birds, and resident birds.
4) Nutrients tied up in tree biomass will return to the system via the natural decomposition process.
5) Loss of a mature tree layer is a natural ecological endpoint along a successional trajectory for many riparian wetlands as windstorms topple shallowly rooted trees (e.g., Red Maples), or banks become repeatedly undercut over time from ice scour or channel water flows.

Furthermore, impact to a number of ecological functions and values would be avoided or minimized by employing best management practices (BMPs) for tree cutting within wetlands. These BMPs include the installation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation control measures, seasonal work restrictions (if applicable) to breeding wildlife resources of conservation concern, and by felling timber in place with no or minimal harvest.

Trees can also be cut in such a way as to fell them as “live cuts”. These are trees that are felled in such a way that when they are cut they can be toppled despite the retention of a hinge of wood and bark on one side. This may allow the tree to survive once it is toppled. Thus the crown becomes immediate living cover in the shrub/sapling layer. Species that respond the best to live cuts are those that are not so brittle as to break off completely when they are felled. Cutting in winter is not ideal for increasing the chance of survival of live cuts, so tree mortality may be high. Regardless, cutting and felling in place using the live cut method could help anchor large woody debris in place so that they do not become a navigational hazard to boats and dock structures in the Connecticut River during spring floods. No large-scale clearing, grubbing, excavation, dredging, or filling within wetland or watercourse resources is included as part of the Proposed Action. Vehicular access to many of the designated tree removal areas is possible using the existing network of roads used to maintain the ACOE flood control dike. The project specifications will avoid the use of timber mats by requiring non-mechanized removal techniques. Alternatively, if frozen ground is present during tree removal, traditional clearing may be possible without temporary fills or soil disturbance. As frozen ground cannot be relied upon, hand cutting (i.e. using chainsaws) is anticipated within wetland areas thus avoiding vehicular traffic. The methods of access, tree cutting, work schedule, timing, and sequencing would be finalized during the design process in coordination with ACOE and CT DEEP. To avoid impacting native plants, no chipping of felled trees would be allowed to occur within sensitive natural areas.

Therefore, soil stabilization impact to hydric and wetland soils is not expected to be significant as large areas of bare soil will not be generated or exposed to the erosive forces of wind and water. Since tree root masses are not being removed from the system but will be left in place, bank stabilization is not expected to be compromised by tree cutting. Additionally, understory trees, shrubs and herbaceous ground cover along the banks of the Connecticut River and Folly Brook will proliferate since they will be released from the low light conditions in which they had formerly been growing. A concerted effort will be made to retain shrub vegetation along the bank of these resources to help maintain the stability of the riverine shoreline to the extent practicable. Implementation, inspection, and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation control BMPs would further reduce the risk of soil loss from the occasional areas where limited amounts of soil disturbance might occur in adjacent upland areas from construction vehicle movements.

The removal of tree cover from riverine systems also typically raises concerns regarding the potential for thermal pollution of surface waters, since the shade of overhanging trees helps to keep waters cooler. Warmer waters hold less dissolved oxygen than cooler waters making them unsuitable for sustaining coldwater fisheries. Removal of riverbank trees may force cold water species to seek out cooler, deeper waters such as the lower depths of the river's navigation channel, or other shaded areas of the river reach.

**Conclusion**: During the design phase of the project, coordination with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the CT DEEP will be conducted, to provide the plan details and process to avoid wetland impacts. Based on similar completed efforts in New England, it is anticipated that a Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Section 404 Permit will not be required, based on winter removal and the planned means and methods described above. Application to the local inland wetland and conservation commission is not required for the proposed activities.

Coordination with the CT DEEP Inland Water Resources Division (IWRD) will be completed to determine any requirements to satisfy the Connecticut Inland Wetland Protection Act. Although there will be no actual filling of wetlands the conversion of existing forested wetlands to scrub/shrub and emergent systems will alter the wetland systems and it is anticipated that state wetland permits will likely be needed. These changes will need to be documented and considered by CT DEEP, along with BMPs and mitigation measures. Presently the CAA is exempt from having to file Flood Management Certifications (FMC) with the CT DEEP Inland Water Resources Division (IWRD).

As this project advances into the permitting phase, more detail regarding which specific trees are to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and other regulatory agencies. Tree removal methodologies to be used in upland areas, within critical habitat areas, and within forested wetland areas will differ and will proceed as directed in the approved project permits.

## 5.18 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

According to the National Park Service website, there are two rivers in Connecticut that are designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers: the Eight Mile River and Farmington River West Branch. These rivers are not in the vicinity of Hartford-Brainard; therefore there will be no impact to any designated Wild and Scenic Rivers.

## 5.19 SUMMARY OF CONSEQUENCES

TABLE 9 – SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND KEY ISSUES

| Impact Category | Potential Impact or Key Issue |
|---|---|
| Air Quality | The tree obstruction removal will not change the operating characteristics of the Airport. There will be no changes in activity levels, aircraft types, or facilities and as such there will be no changes in emissions as a result of the project. While any tree removal has some effect of carbon dioxide and oxygen levels (measurable or otherwise), the proposed action will retain all affected areas in a vegetative state with the associated benefits to air quality. Significant regional health effects are not anticipated. See Section 5.1 and 5.14. The project is not anticipated to worsen the existing marginal non-attainment under NAAQS related to 8-hour ozone. |
| Compatible Land Use | The project will not cause a change in land use and is consistent with local zoning. No compatible land use impacts are anticipated. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Construction Impacts | Construction activity is restricted to a small project areas and will be completed in short timeframes. Tree removal will be conducted during daytime hours and employ proper erosion controls. As such, significant construction impacts (i.e., noise, air quality, erosion, traffic, etc.) are not anticipated. |
| Department of Transportation Act: Section 4(f) | The Folly Brook Natural Area and other designated preservation areas are located within the proposed tree removal area. Federal regulations protect such areas from conversion to a transportation use. As such, the project must not and will not eliminate these protected areas from public use. The proposed action will alter existing trees and vegetation, but will not restrict access or use of the designated areas, and will follow the requirement of the 1990 tree maintenance plan between the City of Hartford and the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut. See Section 5.5. As such, no impacts to 4(f) lands are expected. |
| Farmland | The farmland soils identified in the project area are either forested or in commercial use and have not been used as farmland in recent history. The project will not impact farming or soils classified as prime farmland. |
| Fish, Wildlife, and Plants | Direct impacts to these species may be reduced via use of seasonal restrictions to avoid breeding activities, or in the case of nesting Bald Eagles, no cutting within 660 feet of an active nest. This statement will be reviewed by US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) during the permitting process and determine if biological surveys and/or mitigation is necessary. See Section 5.7. |
| Floodplains | Tree removal does not impact flood levels. The potential for erosion during the removal activity is minimal, as activities will adherence to a soil and erosion control plan. |
| Hazardous Materials | No potential hazardous materials or concerns were identified by the regulatory database review and no hazardous materials were observed during the visual site inspection. As of July 2015 there were no known hazardous materials in the areas of concern. |
| Historical, Architectural, Archeological, and Cultural Resources | SHPO has determined that the removal of trees will not have an impact on cultural or historic resources. |
| Light Emissions & Visual Effects | The proposed action will not create significant light emissions or long term visual impacts. |
| Natural Resources & Energy Supply | The proposed action will required only a limited amount of natural resources and energy during construction activities. No additional resources are needed following implementation. |
| Socioeconomic Impacts | The project will not result in any changes to land uses, the delivery of public services or the availability of jobs. |
| Water Quality | The CTDEEP has expressed a concern for the floodplain forest habitat that exists in the project area. As such, it is anticipated that design and permitting efforts will include measure to minimize disturbance to this biologic community. As a result, No water quality impacts are anticipated. |
| Wetlands | Based on the 'means and methods' of removal, the ACOE has routinely determined that no wetland impacts are created by this type of project, and federal permits are not needed. Coordination with the CT DEEP Inland Wetlands Resources Division (IWRD) will occur during the design process to satisfy the Connecticut Inland Wetland Protection Act and if any permits are necessary. It is anticipated that no mitigation will be necessary or if required will be minor. |
| Other Categories | The analysis identified that no coastal resources, solid waste sites, or wild or scenic rivers are located within the tree removal areas. |
| | |

# 6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

The following individuals prepared this EA on behalf of the CAA.

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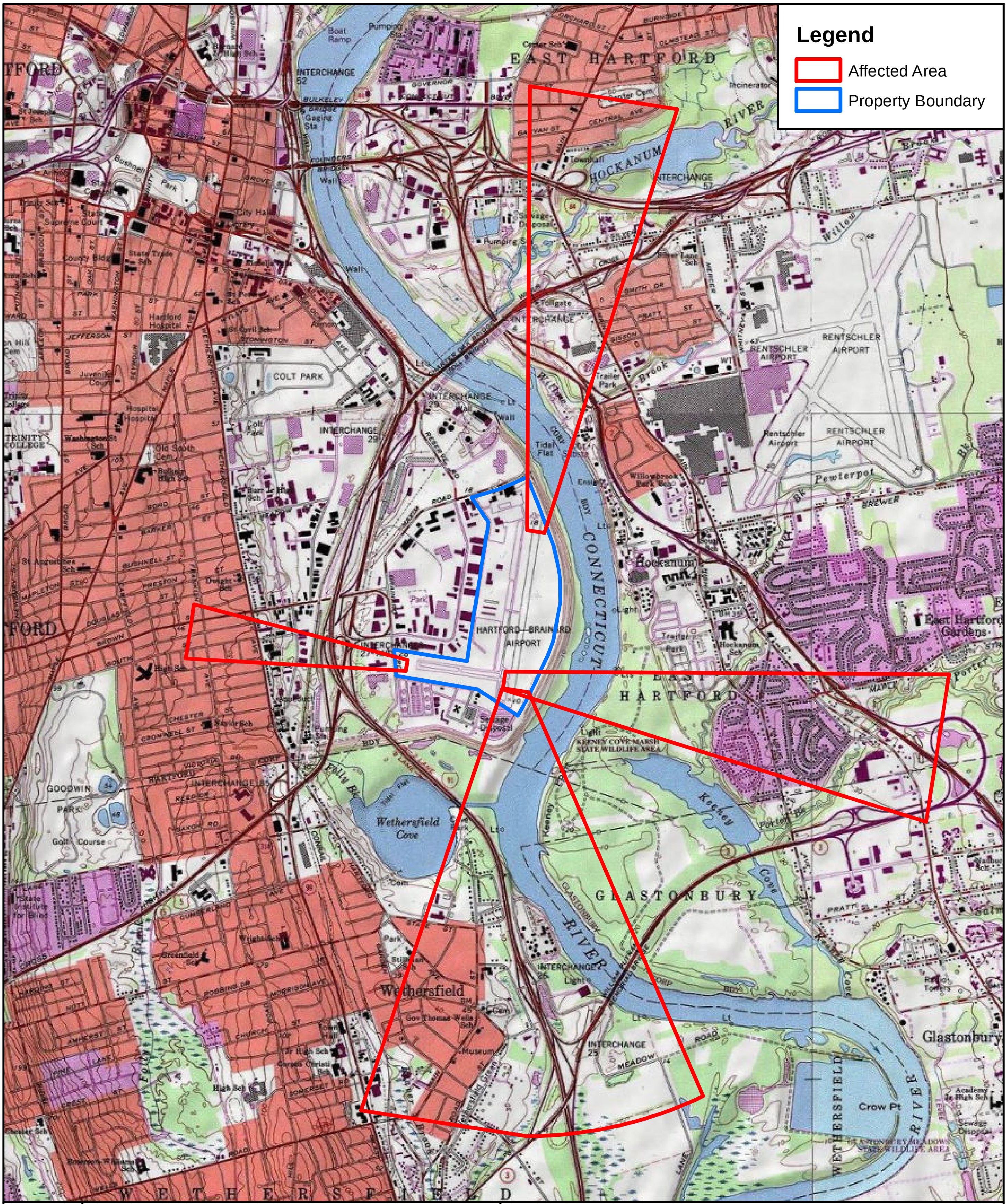
**Fitzgerald and Halliday, Inc.**
Paul Stanton, Senior Project Manager
Anthony Zumba, Environmental Specialist
David Laiuppa, Wetland Scientist

# APPENDIX A
# AIRPORT OBSTRUCTION STUDY MAPS



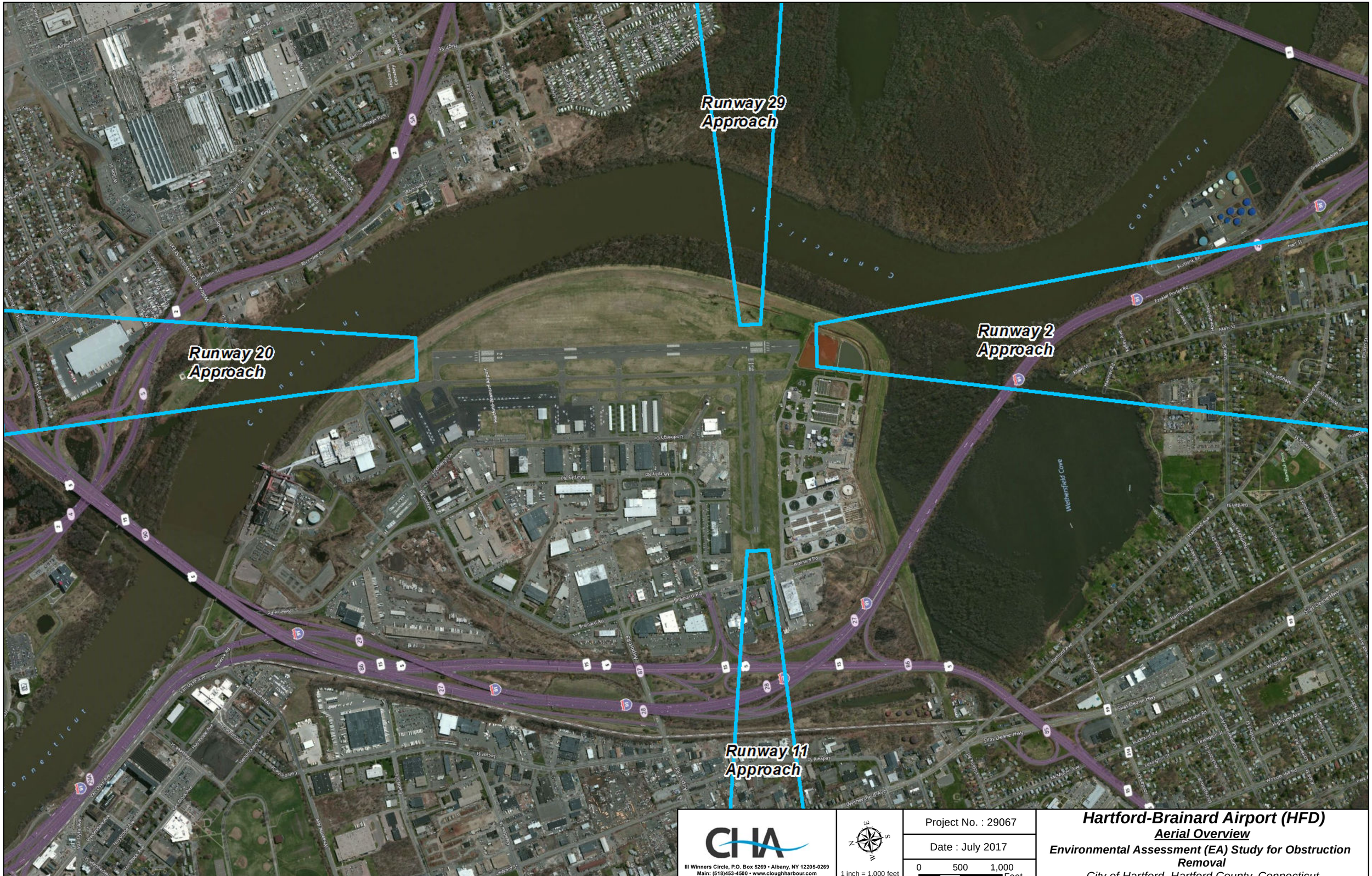

design/construction solutions

# CAA Environmental Assessment (EA) for Obstruction Removal Project Study Area

Scale 1" = 3000'

Project No. 29067

Hartford - Brainard Airport
Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut
North Hartford & South Hartford USGS Quadrangles

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1 inch = 1,000 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : July 2017

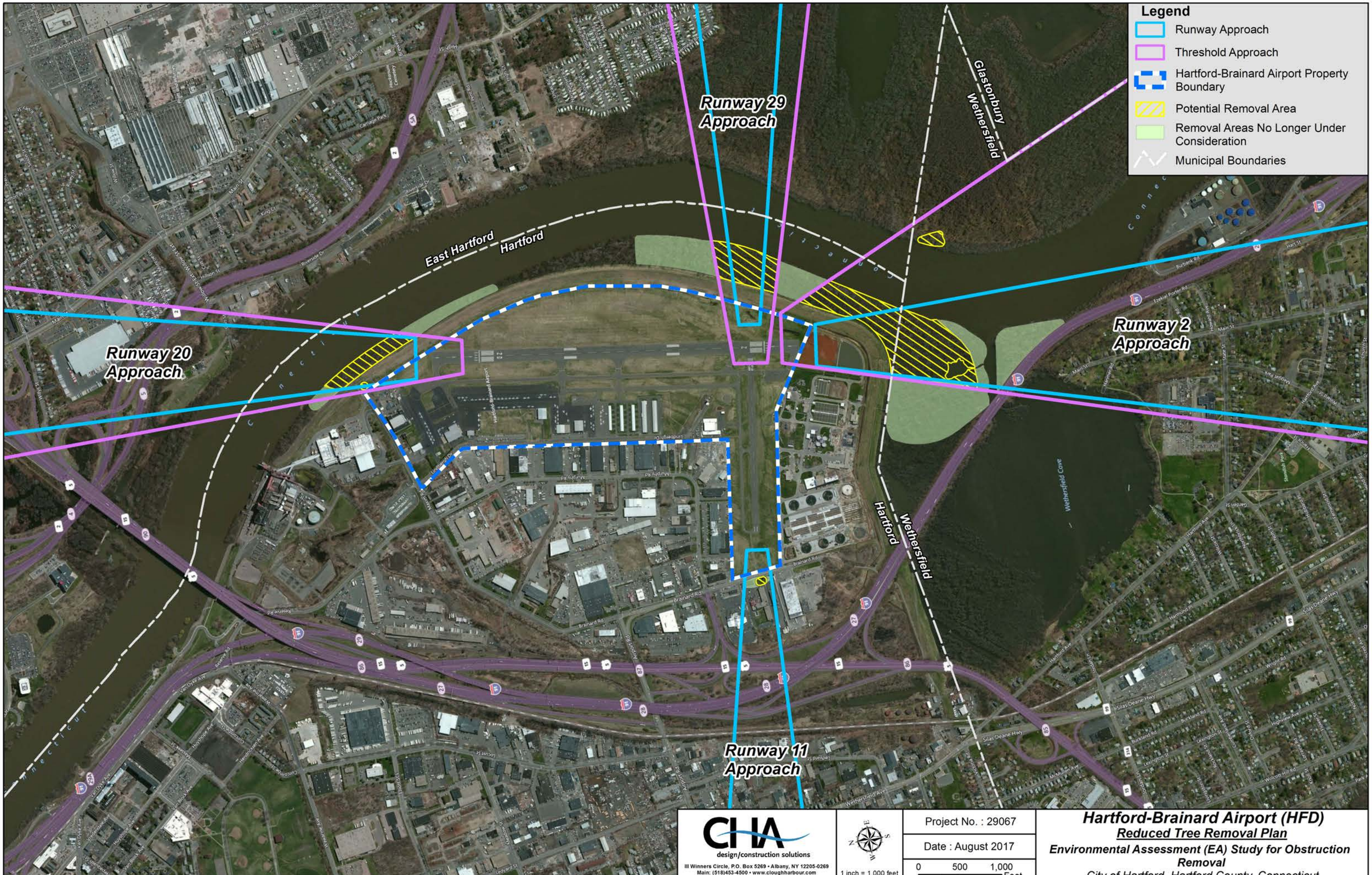
0 500 1,000 Feet

**Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)**

**Aerial Overview**

***Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal***

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*


Legend
Runway Approach
Threshold Approach
Hartford-Brainard Airport Property Boundary
Potential Removal Area
Removal Areas No Longer Under Consideration
Municipal Boundaries
Runway 29 Approach
Glastonbury
Wethersfield
East Hartford
Hartford
Runway 20 Approach
Runway 2 Approach
Wethersfield
Hartford
Runway 11 Approach
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Project No. : 29067
Date : August 2017
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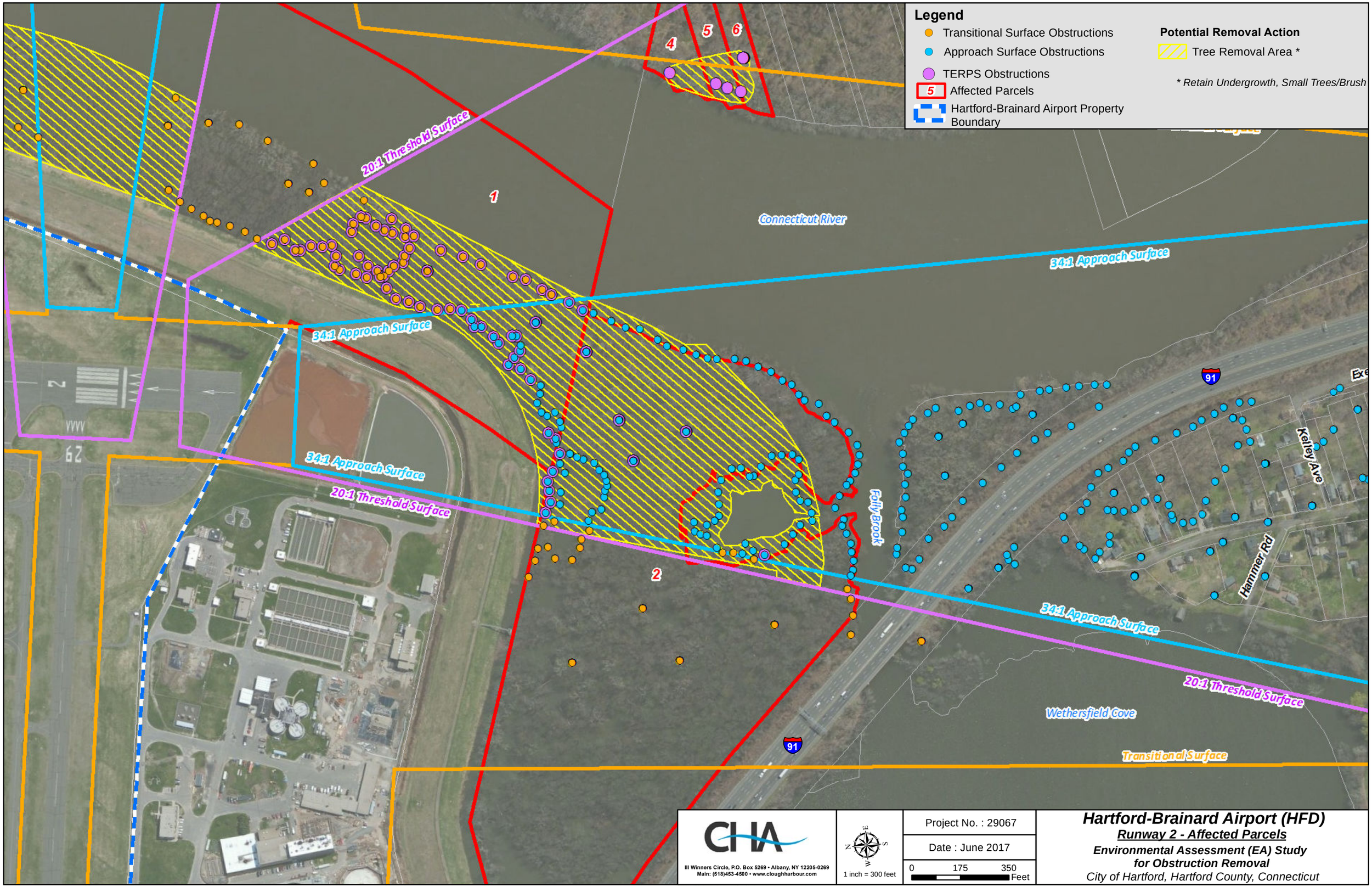
Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)
Reduced Tree Removal Plan
Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal
City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut


Legend
Transitional Surface Obstructions
Approach Surface Obstructions
TERPS Obstructions
5 Affected Parcels
Hartford-Brainard Airport Property Boundary
Potential Removal Action
Tree Removal Area *
* Retain Undergrowth, Small Trees/Brush
1
2
4
5
6
20:1 Threshold Surface
34:1 Approach Surface
Connecticut River
Folly Brook
Wethersfield Cove
Transitional Surface
Kelley Ave
Hammer Rd
91
Z
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1 inch = 300 feet
Project No. : 29067
Date : June 2017
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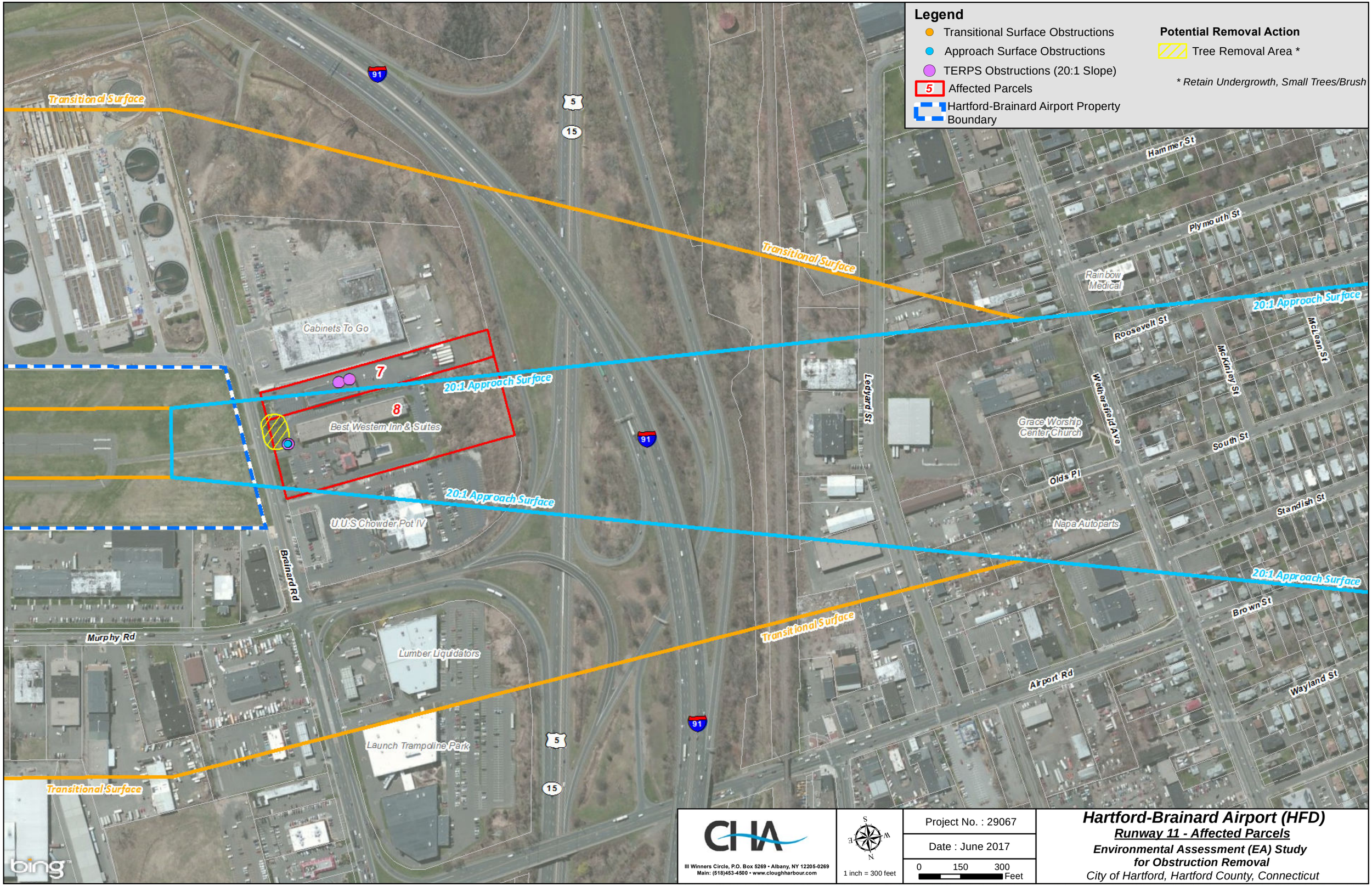
Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)
Runway 2 - Affected Parcels
Environmental Assessment (EA) Study
for Obstruction Removal
City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut

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1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : June 2017

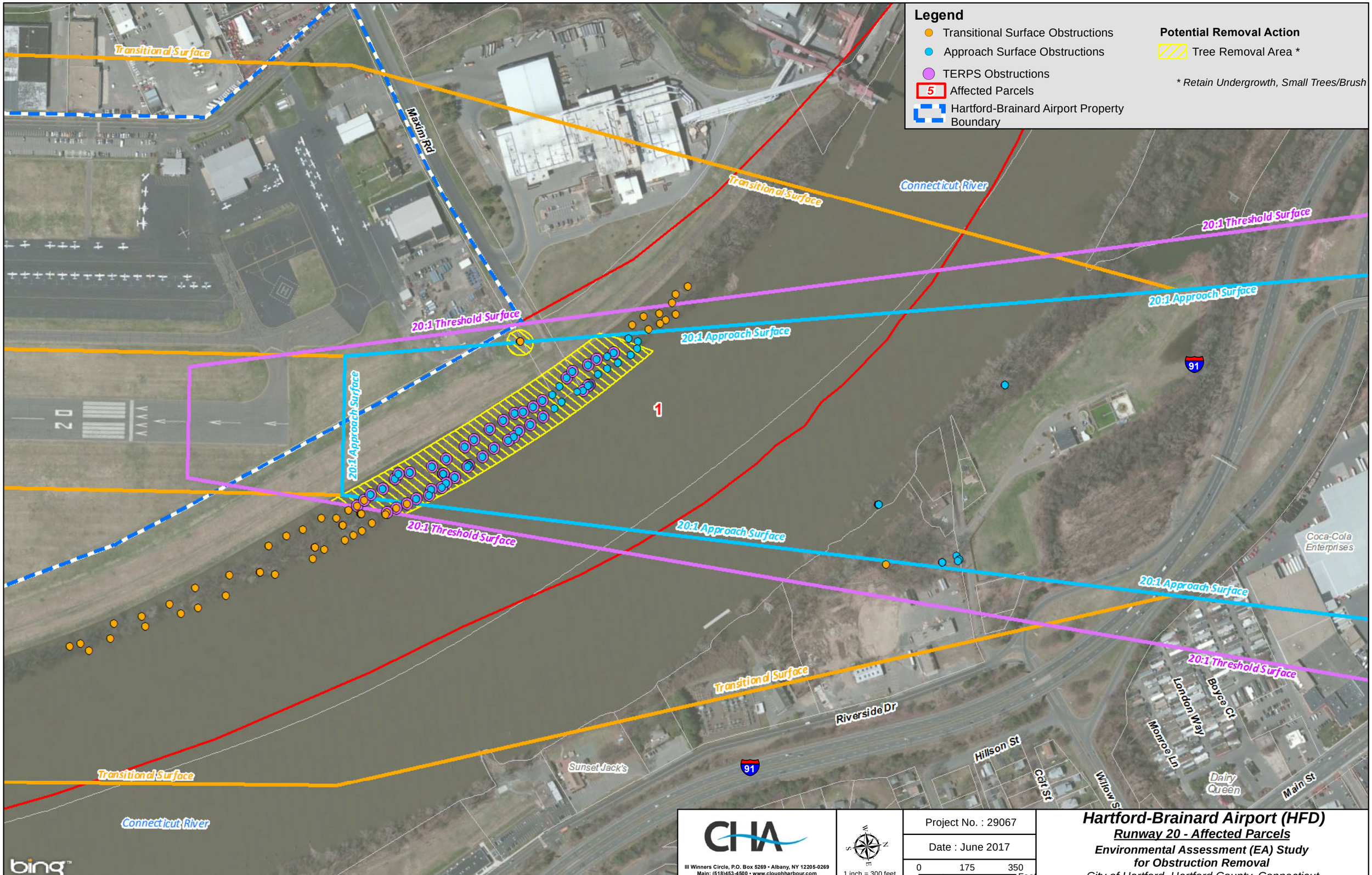
0 150 300 Feet

# Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

## Runway 11 - Affected Parcels

**Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal**

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*

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1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : June 2017

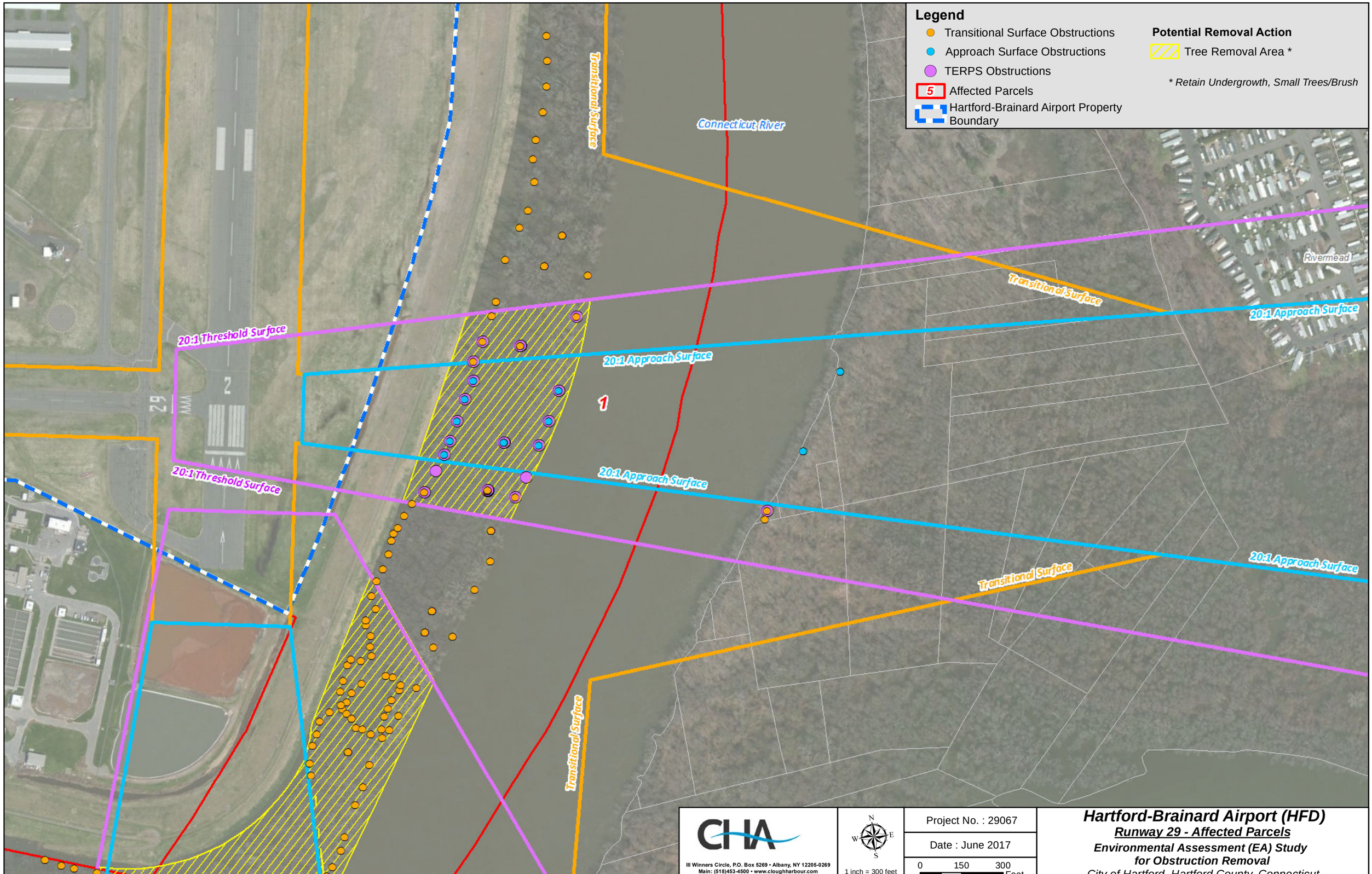
0 175 350 Feet

# Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

**Runway 20 - Affected Parcels**

***Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal***

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*




CHA
III Winners Circle, P.O. Box 5269 • Albany, NY 12205-0269
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N W E S

1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : June 2017

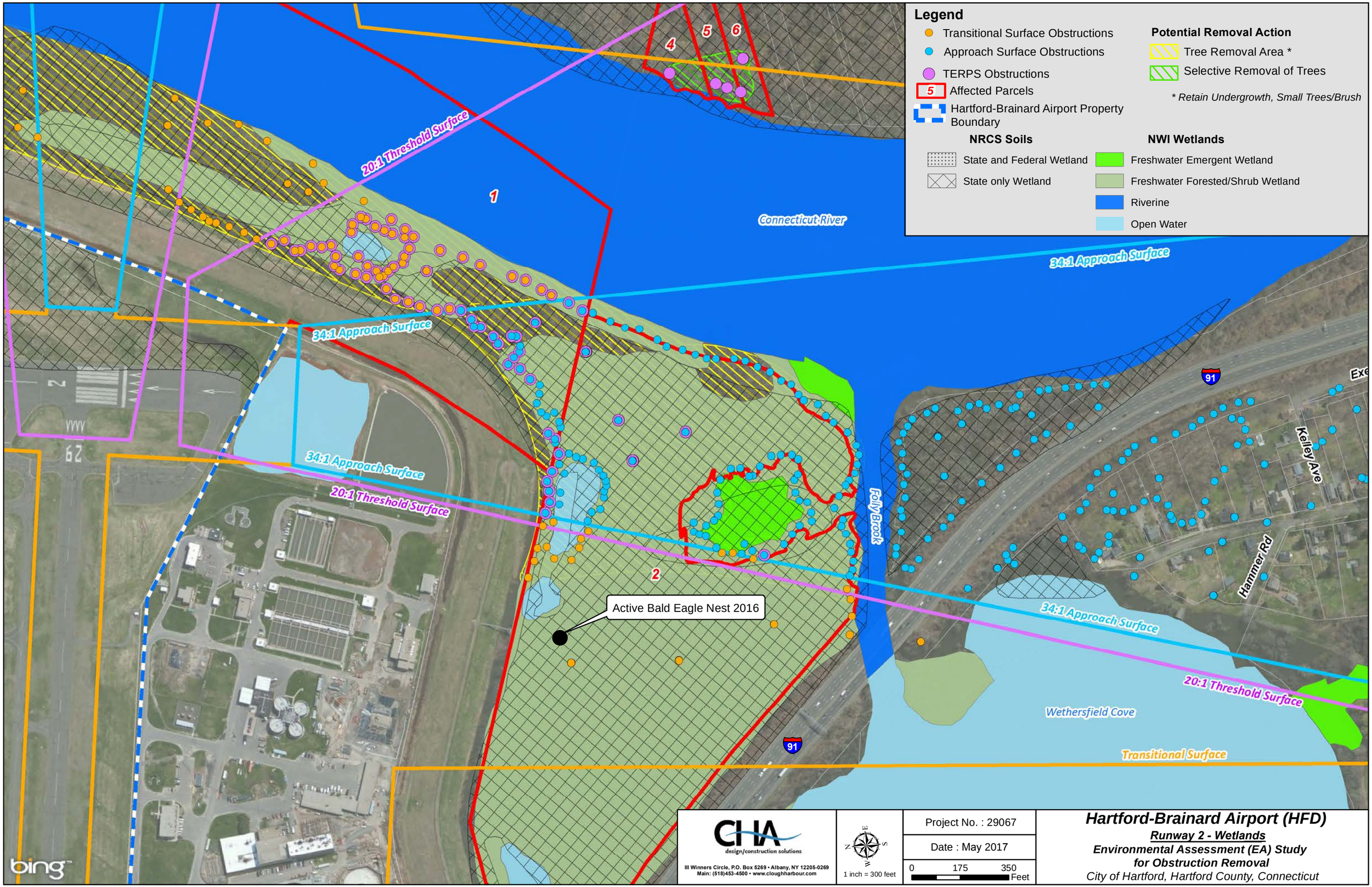
0 150 300 Feet

**Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)**

**Runway 29 - Affected Parcels**

***Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal***

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*

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1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : May 2017

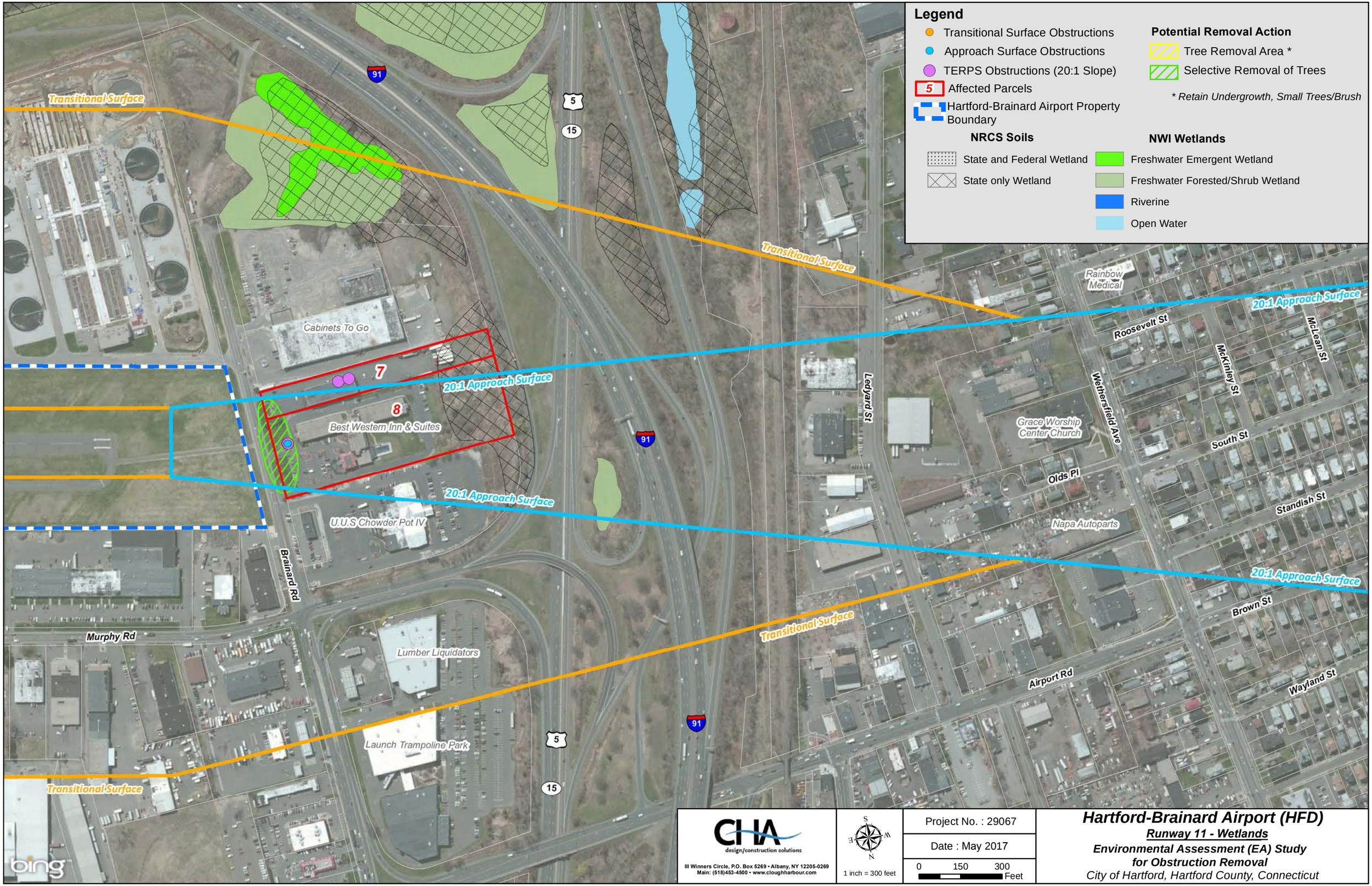
0 175 350 Feet

**Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)**

**Runway 2 - Wetlands**

**Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal**

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*

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1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : May 2017

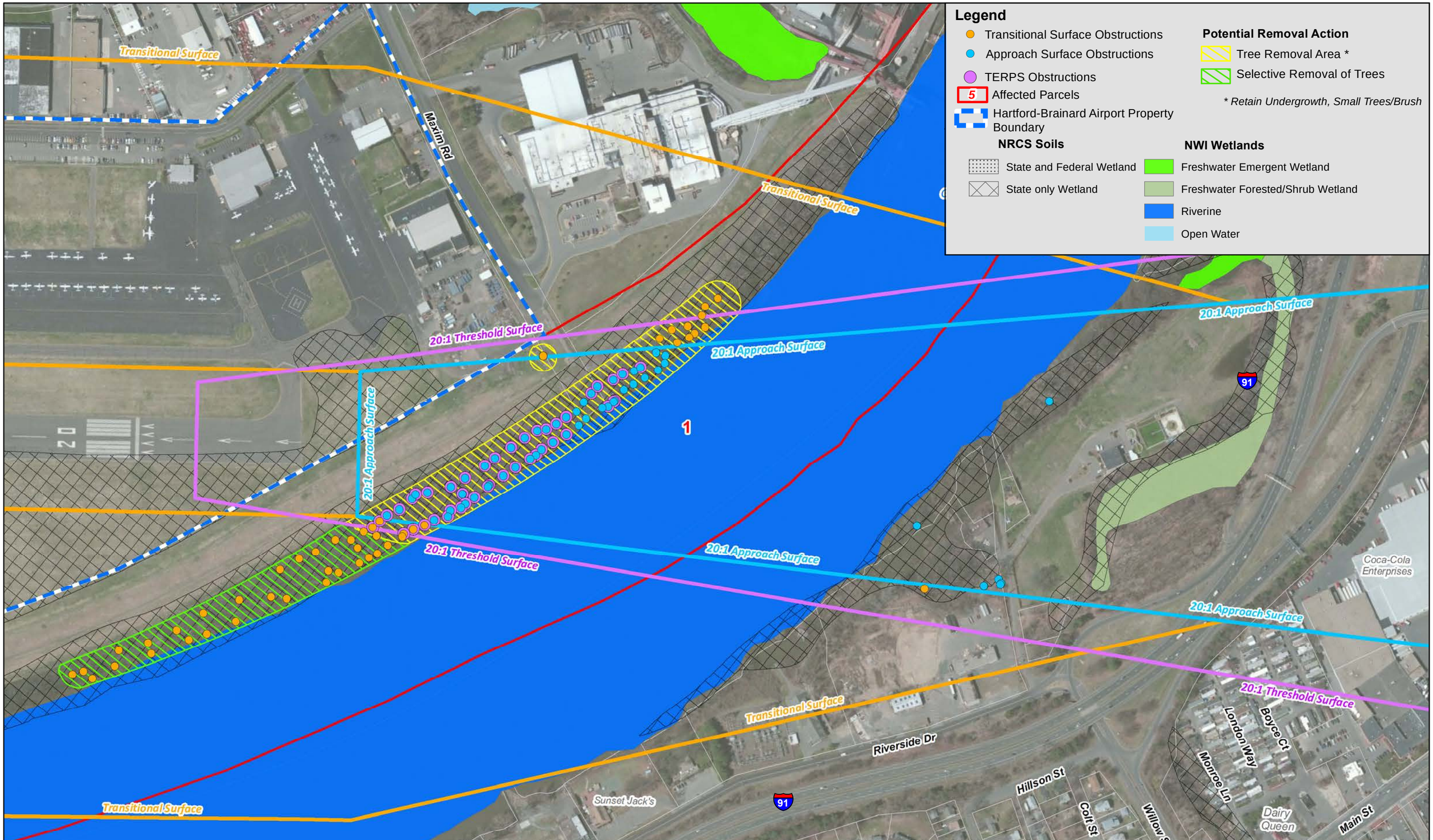
0 150 300 Feet

**Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)**

**Runway 11 - Wetlands**

**Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal**

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*

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1 inch = 300 feet

Project No. : 29067

Date : May 2017

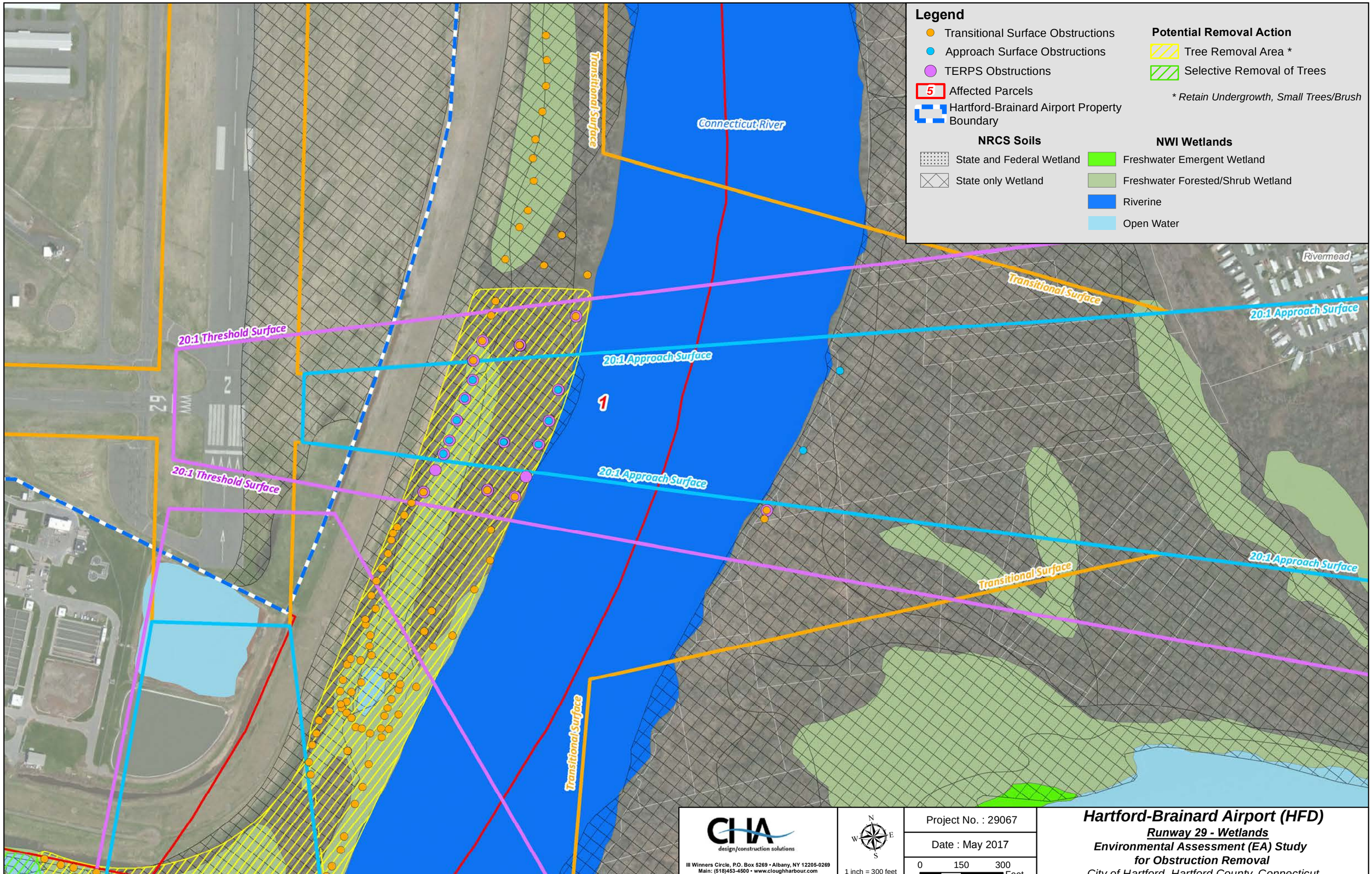
0 175 350 Feet

# Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

**Runway 20 - Wetlands**

***Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for Obstruction Removal***

*City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut*


Legend
Transitional Surface Obstructions
Approach Surface Obstructions
TERPS Obstructions
5 Affected Parcels
Hartford-Brainard Airport Property Boundary
Potential Removal Action
Tree Removal Area *
Selective Removal of Trees
* Retain Undergrowth, Small Trees/Brush
NRCS Soils
State and Federal Wetland
State only Wetland
NWI Wetlands
Freshwater Emergent Wetland
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
Riverine
Open Water
Connecticut River
Transitional Surface
20:1 Threshold Surface
20:1 Approach Surface
Rivermead
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III Winners Circle, P.O. Box 5269 • Albany, NY 12205-0269
Main: (518)453-4500 • www.cloughharbour.com
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Project No. : 29067
Date : May 2017
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Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)
Runway 29 - Wetlands
Environmental Assessment (EA) Study
for Obstruction Removal
City of Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut

# APPENDIX B
# CORRESPONDENCE

**EMAIL:**
From: CT Office of Policy and Management
To: CAA
Date: 11/11/17 – 12/19/17
Subject: CEPA applicability to CAA airports and projects

From: "Bye, Gareth" <Gareth.Bye@ct.gov>
Date: 11/9/17 5:02 PM (GMT-05:00)
To: Paul Pernerewski <ppernerewski@ctairports.org>
Cc: "Morley, Dan D." <Daniel.Morley@ct.gov>, "Wittchen, Bruce" <Bruce.Wittchen@ct.gov>, "Pafford, Matthew" <Matthew.Pafford@ct.gov>, "Sullivan, Michael" <Michael.J.Sullivan@ct.gov>
Subject: Record of Decision pending for Bradley, Waterbury-Oxford, and Danielson GA Airport Projects

November 11, 2017

Paul,

This will serve to close out the underlying issue of whether OPM has a role in reviewing the Record of Decision (ROD) that the Airport Authority (CAA) prepared for the joint Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE), regarding tree work proposed for off-airport tree obstruction at Bradley, Waterbury-Oxford, and Danielson.

Section 22a-1c of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) states only "actions … proposed to be undertaken by state departments, institutions or agencies, or funded in whole or in part by the state" are subject to the CT Environmental Policy Act (CEPA).

Subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 15-120bb states that "the [CAA] shall not be construed to be a department, institution or agency of the state."

OPM has determined that there is no "state action" for the captioned project because the proposed actions are not being sought by a state department, institution or agency funded in whole or part by the state, as required by Section 22a-1c of the Connecticut General Statutes.

It is clear in statute CAA has the duty, power and authority to manage, operate and develop Bradley, the general aviation airports and the other airports defined in Chapter 267b of the Connecticut General Statutes. *See* CGS §§ 15-120aa and 15-120bb. Any remaining bond money that may have been allocated to the DOT's Bureau of Aviation could no longer could be used by DOT because such duties moved to CAA. Consistent with CAAs authority under CGS § 15-120cc(28)(32), such bond monies, in fact, have been transferred by DOT to CAA at its request for CAA's use. Further, since DOT has no grant in place with CAA concerning such projects and there are no DOT "strings" attached to such transfers, DOT's role is simply ministerial. Stated alternatively, DOT has no involvement in the direct management, funding or authority chain associated with the applicable projects.

Therefore, the environmental review for the projects is not under CEPA.

Please feel free to contact this agency should you or your staff have any other questions.

Regards,

Gareth D. Bye
Director of Legal Affairs
Office of The Secretary
State of Connecticut
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379
860-418-6433 (direct)
860-418-6487 (fax)
gareth.bye@ct.gov (e-mail)

**From:** Bye, Gareth [mailto:Gareth.Bye@ct.gov]
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 19, 2017 5:04 PM
**To:** Paul Pernerewski <ppernerewski@ctairports.org>
**Cc:** Kitowicz, Steven <Steven.Kitowicz@ct.gov>; Morley, Dan D. <Daniel.Morley@ct.gov>; Sullivan, Michael <Michael.J.Sullivan@ct.gov>; Tassinari, Brian <Brian.Tassinari@ct.gov>
**Subject:** Record of Decision pending for Bradley, Waterbury-Oxford, and Danielson GA Airport Projects

Paul,

I have run your question past OPM's staff to double check OPM's response.

Some staff are absent from the office until after the Holiday, but staff that are present believe the answer to your question is a simple **yes, that the same analysis set forth in my email stamped Thursday, November 09, 2017 5:02 PM below applies to the referenced airports**.

Regards,

Gareth D. Bye
Director of Legal Affairs
Office of The Secretary
State of Connecticut
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379
860-418-6433 (direct)
860-418-6487 (fax)
gareth.bye@ct.gov (e-mail)

**From:** Paul Pernerewski [mailto:ppernerewski@ctairports.org]
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:49 AM
**To:** Bye, Gareth <Gareth.Bye@ct.gov>
**Subject:** RE: Record of Decision pending for Bradley, Waterbury-Oxford, and Danielson GA Airport Projects

Gareth,

Can you confirm that the same analysis would apply to the other three general aviation airports which the CAA owns and operates, **Hartford-Brainard and Groton-New London and Windham?**

Thanks,
Paul

Paul K. Pernerewski, Jr.
General Counsel
Connecticut Airport Authority
Bradley International Airport
Administrative Office
Terminal A, 3rd Floor
Windsor Locks CT 06096
Ph: 860-292-2026
Fax: 860-627-3594
e-mail: ppernerewski@ctairports.org

Town of Wethersfield
505 SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY
WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06109

January 30, 2017

Mr. Colin F. Geogel, P.E.
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Re: Comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal for the Hartford-Brainard Airport, December 2016.

Dear Mr. Goegel

Although the Town Council of the Town of Wethersfield acknowledges and supports the continued assurances to the FAA that access to the airport is safe and that standards of flight safety are met, the Council has considerable reservations regarding the proposed activity as outlined in the Draft Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal for the Hartford-Brainard Airport, dates December 2016.

The Council requests that all progress towards conducting the obstruction removal be halted until formal public hearings are held in both the Town of Wethersfield and City of Hartford. These hearings should be held in the evening to allow for the greatest possible attendance. Notices of the these hearings should be posted and published in conspicuous locations including the official newspapers of both communities, the Town and City websites, the Connecticut Airport Authority Website, and any other place of publication or notice as required by law or regulation.

These hearings will provide a venue for both the public and the Connecticut Airport Authority to properly vet the issues in regards to the proposed obstruction removal and exchange information regarding the extent of the work and mitigations proposed. A further comment period should be provided for at the end of the public hearing to allow to the greatest extent possible the submission of comments on the proposed obstruction removal plan.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely

Jeff Bridges
Town Manager

Cc. Wethersfield Town Council

**CITY OF HARTFORD PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**
c/o Jamie Bratt, Director of Planning & Economic Development
250 Constitution Plaza, Fourth Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

February 3, 2017

Mr. Colin Goegel, Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airports Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
*via email at cgoegel@ctairports.org*

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal

Dear Mr. Goegel:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft environmental assessment and environmental impact evaluation by the Connecticut Airport Authority regarding the removal of obstructions in and around Brainard Airport.

I write on behalf of the City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission, which is the appointed body of citizen-experts in architecture, law, planning, and real estate, empowered with guiding Hartford's comprehensive plan of development and making zoning decisions. Last year's revisions of Hartford's zoning regulations – which have been recognized for both innovative urban planning principles and robust environmental stewardship – feature robust requirements promoting the planting and maintenance of trees. With these requirements, we intended to reinforce and strengthen provisions in the Tree Ordinance adopted several years ago by the City of Hartford Court of Common Council. Special focus is given in the zoning code to the Connecticut River Overlay, which encompasses a large number of riparian lots and which aims to protect the unique ecological features of the Connecticut River area. Since adopting its award-winning zoning code, the Planning and Zoning Commission has created a working group, the Climate Stewardship Council, which is developing a climate action plan for Hartford that, among other things, will prioritize the enhancement and expansion of our urban tree canopy. The Planning and Zoning Commission also functions as the Inland Wetlands Commission, and in that capacity we review applications for major projects in wetland areas.

It is in this context that we express concern with the proposal by the Connecticut Airport Authority to cut approximately 40 acres of trees in some of our most ecologically sensitive areas. The draft environmental assessment gives us no meaningful way to assess the scope of the proposed project, because it does not provide even an estimated number of trees and landscaping that would be affected. It does not appear to adequately address the concerns

of migratory species and habitat, including of the two nesting bald eagles within the project area. In addition, the draft environmental assessment refers to Hartford's 2015 zoning code, which gives us great concern about the diligence demonstrated by the consultants. Far from being slated for industrial development, the majority of the land being targeted appears to be within the Connecticut River Overlay, the intent of which (as laid out in the zoning code) is incompatible with clear-cutting of large swaths of riverside trees. Moreover, the draft environmental assessment seems to willfully ignore the existence of residents within a half-mile of the project site. Relatedly, we disagree with the report's assertion that there will be "no" environmental justice concerns, when low-income residents, many residents of color, live very near the project site and will be affected by reduced air quality, increased airplane traffic and noise, and an increase in odors from the treatment facilities, currently filtered by trees. Finally, our inland wetland and watercourses regulations do not appear to be given proper consideration by the draft environmental assessment.

We also would like to express concerns about the process. As the body that governs land use decisions made in the city of Hartford, we were not, to our knowledge, contacted by the Connecticut Airport Authority or its consultants. The January 12 public information session was held in Wethersfield, when it appears that over 90% of the project area is not only located in Hartford but owned by the City of Hartford. Indeed, although several of our members are interested in this topic, only one had the opportunity to attend the public information session held in Wethersfield, because of transportation issues and the public's very last-minute notice about the session.

The Commission recognizes that this project is still in the conceptual phase. Going forward, please note that approval from the City of Hartford, including the Mayor's office and City Forester, would be needed for any tree removals anticipated on City property and for any removals of significant trees within City limits. The Planning and Zoning Commission, which as noted above also functions as the Inland Wetlands Commission, may have to review activities proposed to be undertaken under the zoning regulations and the inland wetlands regulations. In addition, approval from this Commission may be needed under Connecticut General Statutes § 8-24. We do not with this letter intend to opine on the latter matter, but we feel that raising concerns now will assist with compliance with the intent and letter of the zoning regulations and other matters within our jurisdiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project. You may receive additional comments from individual members of the Commission, but these comments should be read independently of this letter and should not be construed as necessarily conveying the views of the Commission. If you need additional information or would otherwise like to follow up, I can be reached at 860-840-1408 or sara.bronin@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Sara Bronin
Chair, Planning & Zoning Commission
Chair, Inland Wetlands Commission

# CITY OF HARTFORD

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
50 Jennings Road, Hartford, CT 06120
Telephone (860) 757-9900 / Fax (860) 722-6215
www.hartford.gov

**Hon. Luke Bronin, Mayor**
**Marilynn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works**


February 6, 2017

Mr. Colin Goegel, Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airports Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Via email: *cgoegel@ctairports.org*

RE: Draft Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation of Obstruction Removal, Brainard Airport, Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Goegel:

The following are comments of the Hartford Department of Public Works pertaining to the above-referenced Assessment. In general, a fuller assessment of construction impacts is needed. It is not sufficient to defer the matter of construction impacts to "careful planning and consideration, as well as quality construction supervision." (EA Section 5.4.) See the following points:

1. The number of trees to be cut and/or removed is missing. This information is necessary to evaluate the ecological impact of the project, the biomass involved, the time and extent of disruption needed to perform the proposed work, and the amount of onsite and offsite remediation if required.
2. Clarification is needed regarding the extent to which cut trees are to be removed from the site or left in place after cutting. Trees to be removed from the site will require extraction and transport, likely via large vehicles. The amount and quality of the wetland in which a large part of the work is proposed, and the likelihood of erosion of sediment from disturbed earth surfaces relating to any extraction of trees, requires evaluation in the assessment and certainly warrants the preparation of an erosion control plan and mitigation plan at the early stage of the project. Trees left on-site after cutting may become navigation hazards during annual high-flow river conditions.
3. A description of any chipping/mulching work, the proposed location thereof, and routes of ingress and egress is needed and the potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.
4. A description of any temporary filling, mat placement or other alterations necessary to accommodate access to work areas is needed and the potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.
5. Vehicular access to the project area is an important environmental concern. A drawing and assessment of all vehicle ingress and egress to/from the work zones is needed. Use of the

6. flood levee for this purpose may present engineering issues/concerns. Parking areas for contractors' vehicles and project equipment should be identified. The potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.
7. The location and assessment of any/all material stockpile areas is needed.
8. An assessment of any expected increase in aircraft use of the airport when the proposed work is completed should be included.
9. A description is needed of any herbicidal use, if any, to achieve the project goals, and the potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.
10. An evaluation of potential impacts on the known nest of bald eagle (EA, page 4-5) is needed. Tree cutting activity is proposed in the immediate vicinity of the nest (EA, Runway 2 Map), although the EA (page 5-10) says no cutting will occur within 660 feet of an "active eagle nest." The US FWS Bald Eagle Management Guidelines and Conservation Measures (see https://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle/ baea_nhstry_snstvty.html ) recommend avoiding timber harvesting activities during the nesting season within 660 feet (200 meters) of active and alternate nests. (There are apparently two or more alternate eagle nests within the proposed project area.) Moreover, the Guidelines indicate that the nesting season includes both courtship and nest building, which normally occurs in the months of January and February in Connecticut, and further indicate that this is the "most sensitive period, [during which eagles are] likely to respond negatively." Accordingly, tree removal within 660 feet of the nest may need to occur prior to January of the year. The EA fails to evaluate how tree cutting performed between the months of December and March will affect the eagles' use of the known nest.
11. The number of operations (i.e., takeoffs and landings) described in the EA Section 1.2 (total 81,474) seems high. That total equates to 233 per day or 9.3 per hour or one every 6.5 minutes, day and night, year-round. The number of operations is derived from data published by the FAA dated 2011. Is this data sufficiently current?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Baptist

Thomas R. Baptist
Superintendent

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

**79 ELM STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06106-5127**

**To:** Colin Goegel - Supervising Engineer
Connecticut Airport Authority, 334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Windsor Locks, 06096

**From:** David J. Fox - Senior Environmental Analyst **Telephone:** 860-424-4111

**Date:** February 10, 2017 **E-Mail:** david.fox@ct.gov

**Subject:** Brainard Airport Obstruction Removal Project

The Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) has reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) for proposed obstruction removal in the area surrounding Brainard Airport. The following comments are submitted for your consideration.

The Department recognizes that the need to remove obstructions to the airspace surrounding airports to ensure their safe operation will require clearing of trees beyond the airport. We also understand the CAA's challenge in striking the correct balance between public safety and resource impacts in developing a plan to remove obstructions. Our comments on the document focus on recommending measures to consider to further minimize potential impacts, particularly those to the Connecticut River floodplain forest.

The Department is concerned about the extent of proposed tree removal, particularly within the Folly Brook Natural Area and along the banks of the Connecticut River and Folly Brook. Page 3-5 notes that FAA recognizes that off-airport clearing "is often impractical due to environmental impacts" and has defined a different approach surface, the Threshold Surface, to be utilized in such circumstances. The steeper slope of the Threshold Surface results in fewer penetrations, which should lead to reduced clearing.

The modified obstruction removal alternative, using this threshold surface criteria, has been chosen as the proposed action. However, the figure for the Runway 2 end depicts the entire area between the dike and Folly Brook as a Tree Removal Area, not a Selective Removal Area, apparently meaning removal of all sizable trees as noted on page 3-6, irrespective of whether they are obstructions. While many trees near the dike are Threshold Surface obstructions, none of those depicted along Folly Brook or the Connecticut River are magenta dots. For example, the north bank of Folly Brook is approximately 2700' from the threshold end of Runway 2, so that a tree would have to be 135' tall to be an obstruction, since both locations have approximately the same ground elevation.

Overall, it appears that there would be a meaningful differential between the height of obstructions to the Threshold and the Approach Surfaces. The Folly Brook Tree Removal area ranges between 1600' to 2700' away from the threshold end and between 1200' to 2300' away from the runway end, so the difference in the surface heights between the 1:20 and 1:34 surfaces would be 45' to 67' (all numbers approximate). It would be instructive for reviewers if maps

could be generated by using GIS data for ground elevation and Threshold or Approach Surface elevation that would depict the height of obstructions that would penetrate each of these surfaces at various locations.

Page 3-3 states that the flood control dike is an Approach Surface obstruction. Since the dike is to remain, it appears that clearing trees, which are further removed from the runway, to the Approach Surface criteria would not provide a significant safety improvement, if planes had to be above the approach surface elevation to clear the dike just prior to landing.

Preserving vegetation along the banks of Folly Brook and the Connecticut River should be a primary factor in developing a tree removal plan. In accordance with the Inland Fisheries Division Riparian Corridor policy, the Department recommends that every effort be made to maintain a 100-foot wide natural undisturbed riparian buffer adjacent to these waterbodies. See link for a copy of the policy: Riparian Corridor Policy. A significant riparian buffer adjacent to the river regulates water temperatures and minimizes sedimentation into the river.

As explained in the document, the Folly Brook area is the subject of a conservation easement granted by the City of Hartford to The Nature Conservancy and the tree removal proposal will be developed that is acceptable to the conservancy. The Tree Management Plan developed as a result of the conservation easement includes two subareas, encompassing much of the Folly Brook area, where only "bona fide hazards" should be removed. The Department recommends that CAA limit tree clearing to the maximum extent possible to satisfy the least restrictive FAA safety standard, using the existing height of trees with some modest margin for reasonable growth.

The nature of the forest cover should be explored. Are the trees approximately the same height, with a fairly uniform canopy, or are there individual trees that are significantly taller? Would removing a few taller trees effectively remove obstructions of the Threshold Surface or would widespread clearing be needed?

We also note that the figure for the Runway 2 end depicts the Threshold Surface beginning near the runway end, not at the threshold end. An additional 200' would add 10' to the height of a potential obstruction. In addition, if there are a significant number of Threshold Surface obstructions, could extending the threshold even further back down the runway (i.e., modifying runway 'declared distances') eliminate or significantly reduce required clearing? What are the potential safety and aviation impacts of such a scheme?

All of the dots in the Tree Removal Area off the end of Runway 29, even those along the Connecticut River, are shown as Threshold Surface obstructions. The river is 1400' from the threshold end, which would make a 70' tall tree an obstruction. It appears that meeting even the more lenient safety standard would require removal of a significant fraction of the trees at this location. Again, if extending the threshold is not feasible, every effort should be made to retain as many trees and as much vegetative cover as possible in this riparian zone.

Similarly, the figure for Runway 20 depicts the great majority of trees as Threshold Surface obstructions. The Threshold Surface is also shown beginning 200' past the threshold end. In this case, the river is 1300' from the threshold end, which would make a 65' tall tree an

obstruction. As with Runway 29, if extending the threshold is not feasible, every effort should be made to retain as many trees and as much vegetative cover as possible in this riparian zone.

In discussing potential impacts to wetlands, the document describes a number of tree removal methods. The Land & Water Resources Division recommends that, after NEPA review better defines the areal and quantitative extent of proposed tree removal, the CAA arrange a pre-application meeting to discuss which techniques would best b0e employed at specific locations to minimize potential wetland impacts.

Page 4-5 reports that a bald eagle nest used during the 2016 breeding season is within an area proposed for selective tree removal. However, the figure for Runway 2 depicts the nest 225' west of a tree removal (not selective) area. Page 5-9 notes the typical Fish & Wildlife Service's mitigation measure to maintain a 660' no disturbance zone around active nesting eagles. Though somewhat tolerable of human disturbance, the bald eagles will be negatively affected if work is too close to a nest or roosting site. Delineating protection zones around areas of high eagle use is important. The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) typically recommends the following:

**February 1st through August 1st (bald eagle breeding season)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around any nest site.
- If a bald eagle is found to be nesting on or with 660' of the project area, work shall be halted immediately until after the breeding season.

**December 31st through March 1st (wintering bald eagles)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around areas of high eagle use, particularly winter roosting sites.

Prior to initiating tree removal, it is recommended that CAA hire a qualified ornithologist to conduct surveys in the wooded areas at the ends of Runways 2, 20 and 29 and develop a protection plan. The results of the surveys and the plan should be forwarded to the NDDB for their review.

With regard to bats and breeding birds, page 5-10 states: "Based on other airport obstruction removal projects, direct impacts to these species may be avoided via use of seasonal restrictions (e.g., no tree cutting from May through August when these species are known to breed in New England). As such, significant impacts to critical species is not anticipated, as long as the winter owl roost is not disturbed. This conclusion will be reviewed by USFWS and CT DEEP to determine if biological surveys and potential mitigation are necessary." In order to assure protection of these species, the Department recommends that this restriction be extended: from April 1 through September 30.

The document incorrectly identifies the 2015 *Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan* as the *Connecticut Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (CWCS). This matters in that the plan from 2005 was called the CWCS and utilization of the old name creates confusion as to which list of species of greatest conservation concern apply to the assessment. The document did reference 2015; however, this error should be fixed to eliminate confusion. The document

provided an extensive review of forest interior birds, their habitat requirements and potential impacts, yet forest interior birds are unlikely to use the area for anything other than migration. While the analysis correctly states that the project area does not provide suitable habitat for forest interior birds, it fails to discuss the value of the project area as migratory stopover habitat for these species. (Migration is most likely when observations of forest interior species were made within the project area.)

Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed, regardless of project phasing**,** require an NPDES permit from the Permitting & Enforcement Division. The *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities* (DEEP-WPED-GP-015) will cover these discharges. The construction stormwater general permit dictates separate compliance procedures for Locally Approvable projects and Locally Exempt projects (as defined in the permit). Locally Exempt construction projects, such as those undertaken by CAA, disturbing over 1 acre must submit a registration form and Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) to the Department. The SWPCP must include measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post construction stormwater management. The construction stormwater general permit registrations can now be filed electronically through DEEP's e-Filing system known as ezFile. Additional information can be found on-line at: Construction Stormwater GP.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal. If there are any questions concerning these comments, please contact me.

cc: Robert Hannon, DEEP/OPPD
Robert Gilmore, DEEP/LWRD
Jenny Dickson, DEEP/WD
Dawn McKay, DEEP/NDDB
Graham Stevens, DEEP/CALM

**Luke A. Bronin**
**Mayor**

April 18, 2017

Dear Representatives of the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), the Federal Aviation Administration, and CHA Consulting, I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on the CAA's plan for tree removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport.

While I am supportive of efforts to improve aviation safety, I remain concerned about the proposal in its current form. My understanding is that plan would result in the destruction of a large number of healthy trees, without a clear improvement in terms of safety.

Hartford's woodland areas are important to our City, and the area under consideration is of significant public value. Any changes to the land should be made for a defined public benefit, and after mitigation of potential harm. Many of the trees slotted for removal either play an important role in the ecological health of the Connecticut River, or support the habitats of several animal species, including our national emblem, the Bald Eagle.

I am also concerned about the equity of the plan in terms of public health. Hartford already has the highest rate of asthma-related emergency room visits in the state, and any assessment of the plan would be incomplete without a measure of how air pollion would be affected.

I urge the CAA to carefully consider and respond to the concerns raised by residents and environmental experts about the proposed plan.

Sincerely,

Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

**550 Main Street**
**Hartford, Connecticut 06103**
**Telephone (860) 757-9500**
**Facsimile (860) 722-6606**

Town of Wethersfield
505 SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY
WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06109

May 22, 2017

Mr. Colin Goegel, Supervising Engineer
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Re: Comments from Town of Wethersfield
Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Evaluation and Environmental Assessment
Tree Obstruction Removal

Dear Mr. Goegel

Thank you for holding the various public hearings regarding the proposed obstruction removal project for the Hartford-Brainard Airport. I am sure the Connecticut Airport Authority received a lot of valuable information from the process.

By way of formal comments on the Environmental Impact Statement the Town of Wethersfield offers the following:

Generally speaking the Town would encourage the Connecticut Airport Authority to develop an obstruction removal plan that requires the least amount of impact while attaining compliance with Federal Aviation Administration regulations. The Environmental Impact Statement recommends the "Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative" in order to be compliant with the regulations as to obstructions in the Threshold Surface. As heard in the public hearings, impacts even with this modified approach may be severe. Further details and vetting of this alternative are necessary.

The Draft Environmental Assessment finds that there are no environmental impacts from the proposed work. We have heard from the information at the public hearings this may not be the case. Erosion and sedimentation from the removal of the trees is a concern as is impacts to

wildlife in the proposed area of work. These impact need to be further investigation and mitigation plans further defined.

The Connecticut Airport Authority will need to secure permits from the Town of Wethersfield Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission prior to the commencement of any work.

The Connecticut Airport Authority is required to work with the Wethersfield Tree Warden, Cory Christians, on the proposed tree cutting and mitigation measures.

A long term monitoring plan should be developed for the area to make sure if any work is done and mitigations implemented, then the effectiveness of those mitigations can be measured and if necessary further actions can be taken to offset impacts.

Although not directly related to the proposed work there is a consistent problem with planes not following the noise abatement procedures. The Connecticut Airport Authority needs to do more to educate and implement these procedures for the Hartford-Brainard Airport.

Thank you for your attention to these comments. We look forward to having these addressed in the final plan.

If you have any questions please call me at 860-721-2801.

Sincerely

Jeff Bridges
Town Manager

Cc. Mayor Paul Montinieri and Wethersfield Town Council Members

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

April 27, 2017

To the Connecticut Airport Authority:

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our position on the tree obstruction removal plan at Hartford-Brainard Airport. For several reasons, we believe that the current plan is not in the best interests of our environment or Wethersfield constituents.

First, the plan has not been adjusted to reflect concerns that were raised by Wethersfield residents in January. During the first CAA-sponsored public hearing on this matter, many residents spoke out against removing trees from the twenty acres of land located in Wethersfield because it would be environmentally irresponsible. These twenty acres of land are categorized as a floodplain forest. These forests have many benefits. Two of the most important include their ability to act as buffers between agricultural or urban areas and the state's water resources and the biologically diverse habitats that they provide. For these two key reasons, we, along with residents, are firmly opposed to disrupting this ecosystem.

Additionally, this parcel provides opportunities for recreational activities that many of our residents enjoy. With the removal of these trees, the opportunities for recreational activity become diminished greatly.

Thirdly, this plan disregards the conservation easement that was put into place. This easement prevents the wholesale of cutting trees. It is alarming to know that this easement is being ignored in the planning of this project.

Lastly, residents still do not have answers to their questions from January regarding the tree removal process. When they presented their questions to the CAA, they were told that answers would be provided directly prior to the permitting phase. Our constituents deserve transparency in this process and we ask that any details on this removal process be shared so that the public may comment accordingly.

We appreciate your consideration of our position and hope that our concerns will be addressed.

Sincerely,

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| John Fonfara | Paul Doyle | Russell Morin | Tony Guerrera |
| State Senator | State Senator | State Representative | State Representative |

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Connecticut Fund for the Environment

Save the Sound®

January 25, 2016

Mr. Colin Goegel
Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

**RE: Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation for Tree Obstruction Removal at the Hartford-Brainard Aiport**

Dear Mr. Goegel,

The Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE") and its bi-state program Save the Sound respectfully submit the following comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment ("EA") and Environmental Impact Evaluation ("EIE") for selective tree removal in the vicinity of the Hartford-Brainard Airport. CFE is a state and region-wide nonprofit organization devoted to environmental protection and advocacy that represents approximately 5,000 member households in both Connecticut and New York.

The Connecticut Airport Authority's ("CAA") current Draft EA/EIE is wholly inadequate and fails to take into account the actual environmental impacts of the preferred alternative. Additionally, it overlooks both the nature of the properties that tree removal will impact and relevant policies of the City of Hartford that are pertinent to CAA's proposed plan. Specifically, while CFE recognizes that aviation safety and unobstructed airspace are necessary objectives which require CAA to periodically remove obstructive trees in various locations throughout the state, the Draft EA/EIE does not take into account the serious environmental implications of the removal a large swath of invaluable urban trees along a riverbank and contains insufficient discussion on how resulting impacts will be effectively mitigated. Furthermore, the current analysis contains grave errors concerning local land use controls and environmental policies and sidesteps the issue of this project's ultimate necessity, given the ongoing public debate as to the closure of the Hartford-Brainard Airport. Applicable state and federal law requires CAA to fully evaluate the anticipated environmental impacts of its proposed actions and failure to do so contravenes the agency's duties to the public.[1] CAA must adequately address these issues in its final EA/EIE or withdraw its current proposal until CAA can assure that its plans will be in accord with local land use restrictions and municipal policies.

## I. The Draft EA/EIE Fails to Adequately Consider Environmental Impacts on Freshwater Wetlands and Important Wildlife Habitat

Overall, the Draft EA/EIE does not consider, in sufficient depth, the likely environmental impacts that will ensue as the result of removing up to 40 total acres of trees across eight distinct

[1] *See* Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 22a-1b, 22a-1c; 42 U.S.C. § 4332(C).

parcels of land.[2] As the current analysis correctly notes, the majority of the land impacted by the preferred alternative of modified obstruction removal consists of deciduous floodplain forests and palustrine forested wetlands.[3] What is absent from the analysis, however, is a detailed accounting of anticipated impacts and realistic mitigation strategies. Despite the stated objective of removing numerous, well-developed wetland trees, the Draft EA/EIE summarily concludes that such action will have no effect on the valuable services provided by wetlands, such as sediment retention, flood control, or riverbank stabilization.[4] Although CAA identifies that tree removal may result in habitat loss, deoxygenation of adjacent waters, and possible soil loss from construction equipment activity, the Draft EA/EIE cursorily states that best management practices ("BMPs") will be employed and leaves its mitigation analysis at that.[5] Employing the language of mitigation does not equate to actual, concrete mitigation practices. The forested wetlands affected under the preferred alternative are doubly important given their role as riparian wetlands which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River, a watercourse which is subject to regular seasoning flooding.[6] The current analysis devotes scant attention to how the removal of stabilizing wetland trees will impact seasoning flooding in the impacted area.[7] Rather, CAA postpones any significant analysis of wetland impacts by stating it will coordinate with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("DEEP") and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACOE") at a subsequent phase of the project.[8] CAA should be coordinating with these agencies now to ensure that all impacts are fully anticipated and mitigation properly accounted for. The Draft EA/EIE provides no evidence that CAA has begun consulting with DEEP or USACOE in any meaningful way.

Similarly, the Draft EA/EIE omits serious analysis concerning the likely impacts that will result on wildlife habitat, namely that of endangered and threatened species. CAA's evaluation begins promisingly, noting the presence of both the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) and Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) within the sites that the preferred alternative will disrupt.[9] Both species are rigorously protected under various state and federal laws.[10] Indeed, the Draft EA/EIE correctly notes that the Bald Eagle is on the rebound along the Connecticut River, with confirmed nesting during the 2016 breeding season and several years prior in the exact sites slated for tree removal under the preferred alternative.[11] The Draft EA/EIE, however, then devotes much of its analysis to potential impacts on forest breeding interior bird species and the Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)—neither of which are even at risk of being affected by the preferred alternative.[12] Yet, as to those species actually affected by tree removal

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[2] Connecticut Airport Authority, "Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) & Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for Obstruction Removal Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)," 3-5 (Dec. 2016).
[3] *Id.* at 4-7–4-8.
[4] *Id.* at 5-15–5-18.
[5] *Id.* at 5-16–5-17.
[6] Christine Woodside, "It's Spring, The River Must Be Rising," *New York Times* (May 6, 2001), available at http://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/06/nyregion/it-s-spring-the-river-must-be-rising.html (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).
[7] Connecticut Airport Authority, *supra* note 1, at 5-16.
[8] *Id.* at 5-17.
[9] *Id.* at 4-4–4-5.
[10] 16 U.S.C. § 703–709; 50 C.F.R. § 10.13; "Endangered and Threatened Species," DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (last updated Jan. 11, 2017), available at http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=326210 (last visited Jan. 18, 2017).
[11] Connecticut Airport Authority, *supra* note 2, at 4-5.
[12] *Id.* at 5-8–5-9.

at the proposed site—the American Kestrel and Bald Eagle—CAA offers a brief proposal to institute a 660 foot no-cut zone around any active Bald Eagle nest.[13] This proposition is devoid of support. The Draft EA/EIE cites no source or sound wildlife management practice as the origin of the 660 foot figure, leaving the public with the impression that this figure is arbitrary. Similarly, given the complete lack of analysis in this section, it is impossible to determine whether such a buffer would even be practicable in every site where a Bald Eagle nest is located. In some cases, a 660 foot buffer would almost certainly leave some obstructive trees within the airspace, thereby calling into question whether this project is even that necessary or whether CAA is actually serious about maintaining such a buffer zone—assuming it is actually supported by sound science—in place.

## II. The Draft EA/EIE Disregards Local Land Use Regulations and the Critical Role of Urban Forests

One of the more striking failings of the Draft EA/EIE is that it overlooks the local land use regulations and controls that determine which activities may and may not validly be conducted on the very property that the preferred alternative proposes to impact. This is more than a mere oversight in the drafting process, but a serious and disturbing lack of due diligence on the part of CAA. The failure to draft the EA/EIE in accord with applicable land use controls renders the Draft EA/EIE inadequate. CAA must either withdraw its current proposal or start over and redo its analysis on the basis of actual, applicable municipal regulation and private property restrictions.

First, the Draft EA/EIE is utterly inconsistent with the relevant zoning of the affected property under Hartford's zoning regulations. Remarkably, the Draft EA/EIE fails to even mention the correct zoning of the property and, indeed, purports that the impacted land is zoned for industrial use, which is incorrect.[14] Under Hartford's most recent zoning map, the land on which CAA proposes to remove the allegedly obstructive trees is zoned as Connecticut River Overlay.[15] Per the zoning regulations, such overlay "is intended to improve access and enjoyment of the Connecticut River through carefully planned, use-specific development that is sensitive to the ecology of an urban waterway."[16] As the Draft EA/EIE relies on incorrect zoning from the outset, its analysis naturally does not account for the impacted land's zoning as Connecticut River Overlay and accordingly fails to demonstrate how tree removal is consistent with the goals of that particular zoning overlay.

Second, the Draft EA/EIE does not take into account the City of Hartford's tree protections in the context of its proposal. Research strongly suggests that the presence of trees and other green spaces within urban areas has significant social benefits, including a decrease in mental health issues[17] and crime rates.[18] Hartford has recognized the critical role that trees play

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[13] *Id.* at 5-10.
[14] *Id.* at 4-2.
[15] *See* "City of Hartford Adopted Zoning Map," (July 28, 2016), available at http://www.hartford.gov/images/Planning/PZ/ADOPTED_Zoning_Map_07122016.pdf (last visited Jan. 13, 2017).
[16] City of Hartford Zoning Regulations § 5.4.1(A).
[17] Chris Mooney, "Scientists Have Discovered that Living Near Trees is Good for Your Health," *The Washington Post* (July 9, 2015), available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-

in the urban environment by affording robust protection to Hartford's trees in its zoning regulations. In pertinent part, the tree-specific goals of Chapter 6 of the zoning regulations include "the prudent use of water and energy resources by achieving and maintaining sustainable, functional landscapes" and "to mitigate the impacts of climate change through prudent management of natural resources and wildlife habitat."[19] The current Draft EA/EIE not only overlooks this aspect of the zoning regulations, but fails to undertake any analysis pursuant to it.

Similarly, it bears mentioning that Hartford has enacted a comprehensive and progressive municipal tree ordinance.[20] Recognizing the paramount importance of urban forestry, the ordinance specifically recognizes that Hartford's trees alone remove 2,400 tons of carbon, 73 tons of other pollutants, and 37 tons of asthma inducing particulate matter from the atmosphere per year.[21] Accordingly, Hartford's trees are stringently protected under the ordinance. No person may remove a tree without consent of the City Forester[22] and the removal of certain trees requires the replacement of those trees in order to ameliorate any overall tree loss.[23] The relevant portions of the Draft EA/EIE, however, make no mention of the tree ordinance, how CAA plans to comply with its substantive provisions, and no indication that CAA has begun to coordinate with the City Forester. As the very trees CAA proposes to remove are protected by the ordinance, this is an extraordinary defect in the Draft EA/EIE and must be rectified.

Third, as the Draft EA/EIE notes, as part of the preferred alternative, some trees selected for removal will be located within the boundaries of the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area.[24] Although the Draft EA/EIE alleges that only a small amount of tree removal will occur on this property, the importance of those trees removed are heightened given the property's use as a designated state wildlife area and the role that the current level of tree cover plays in providing wildlife habitat in an otherwise urban, highly developed area of the state.[25] Of critical importance is the fact that, as CAA acknowledges, there is no tree management plan applicable to this property.[26] Despite this lack of guidance as to what site specific steps must be taken to ensure ecologically sound tree removal, the Draft EA/EIE contains no indication that CAA has opened a dialogue with DEEP or other relevant stakeholders but rather defers such integral coordination to a later date.[27] This lack of process and communication in the face of nonexistent tree management standards is unacceptable. CAA must coordinate with DEEP to identify articulable standards in order to best protect the valuable ecological resources of the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area.

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environment/wp/2015/07/09/scientists-have-discovered-that-living-near-trees-is-good-for-your-health/?utm_term=.4fc1b031327e (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).

[18] United States Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, "Some city trees may discourage 'shady' behavior; Study explores relationship between urban trees and crime," SCIENCEDAILY (Nov. 2, 2010), available at https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/11/101101171240.htm (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).

[19] City of Hartford Zoning Regulations, § 6.1.1

[20] *See* Hartford Municipal Code, Chapter 28, Article IV.

[21] Hartford Municipal Code § 28-153

[22] Hartford Municipal Code § 28-160(a)

[23] Hartford Municipal Code § 28-162

[24] Connecticut Airport Authority, *supra* note 2, at 5-6.

[25] *Id.*

[26] *Id.*

[27] *Id.*

Fourth, the Draft EA/EIE gives insufficient regard to the fact that much of the tree removal will also occur on land protected under conservation easements held by the Nature Conservancy. The Folly Brook Natural Area, as the conservation easement lands are known, is subject, unlike Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area, to an ongoing tree maintenance plan entered into between the Nature Conservancy and the City of Hartford in 1990.[28] The Draft EA/EIE contains absolutely no detail as to what this plan requires of CAA or how it intends to comply with the plan's provisions—whatever they may be. Similarly, the Draft EA/EIE contains no indication that CAA has reached out to the Nature Conservancy and begun coordinating with that organization.

### III. The Draft EA/EIE Contains No Analysis on Climate Change

CFE also harbors serious concerns over the fact that Draft EA/EIE does not contain any analysis concerning the climate change implications of removing numerous riparian trees along an urban waterway that is already prone to flooding. Forested areas provide critical ecosystem services by serving as carbon sinks that absorb the excess atmospheric carbon dioxide that contributes to climate change.[29] Such resources are particularly valuable in communities like Hartford where the prevailing urban landscape means that there are fewer large parcels of green space containing mature trees. As previously noted, Hartford's tree ordinance makes specific reference to the contributions that trees make to the city in terms of carbon sequestration.[30] Under the Draft EA/EIE, it is difficult to discern the exact number of trees that will be removed and thus the localized and statewide climatological impacts. Although anthropogenic climate change is an ecological crisis on a global scale, its localized effects are relevant in the present matter where the proposed tree removal will expose a riverbank flanking a major urban area to increased soil instability, flooding, and erosion.

Similarly, CFE strongly urges CAA to conduct a study on the statewide impacts that will result from the cumulative impacts resulting from all of CAA's proposed tree removal projects at various airports throughout the state. In isolation, a project like that proposed at the Hartford-Brainard Airport may seem small in scale. The planning for this project, however, is proceeding concurrent with other projects proposed at the Groton-New London Airport[31] and Killingly-Danielson Airport,[32] with presumed additional removal projects to occur at other airports. Given that the aggregate number of trees removed in accordance with these proposals will be vast, CAA must include in the final EA/EIE an analysis of the effects on carbon sequestration at the programmatic level. Furthermore, relevant law requires that CAA conduct an analysis of the project's cumulative impacts as part of its EIE review.[33]

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[28] *Id.* at 5-6.
[29] United States Forest Service, Northern Research Station, "Carbon Sequestration," (Jan. 19, 2017), available at https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/niacs/carbon/forests/carbon_sequestration/ (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).
[30] Hartford Municipal Code § 28-153.
[31] Council on Environmental Quality, ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR (last updated Jan. 17, 2017), available at http://www.ct.gov/ceq/cwp/view.asp?a=987&q=249438 (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).
[32] *Id.*
[33] Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-1b(c)(2).

## IV. Overall, the Draft EA/EIE Contains a Disturbing Number of Errors and Assumptions

Finally, CFE is deeply troubled by the lack of care and attention to detail that seemingly went into conducting the analysis that the EA/EIE process requires. The document is rife with factual and legal mistakes, generic descriptions and analyses, and an alarming absence of specificity. As mentioned in Section II of these comments, the Draft EA/EIE either does not mention controlling land use regulations relevant to the preferred alternative or cites to inapplicable provisions. At several points through the document, the Draft EA/EIE refers to the impacts on the "Windham Airport"[34] or the "Waterbury-Oxford Airport,"[35] leaving the public with the unsavory impression that portions of the analysis were simply reused from previous analyses conducted for completely different projects. Indeed, a comparison of the Draft EA/EIE for this project with the documents for the Groton-New London and Killingly-Danielson projects reveals an astounding similarity between all three analyses, as if CAA were working from a common template rather than evaluating the specific impacts on three wildly different locations. In totality, these errors and substantive defects indicate that CAA is not undertaking its statutory duty to evaluate environmental impacts in a serious and diligent manner.

Astoundingly, the Draft EA/EIE makes no mention whatsoever of the fact there have been legitimate questions in recent years as to whether the Hartford-Brainard Airport will continue to operate in the future. During the previous legislative session, an investigative committee explored this very issue and ultimately recommended, at the time, to keep the airport in operation for the time being.[36] Much may change over the next several years, given the potential economic burden the airport poses for Hartford.[37] As work on the ground for CAA's preferred alternative will not commence for several years, it would be an inefficient use of public funds and time for CAA to plan an entire obstruction removal strategy only for the airport to close in the interim. The final EA/EIE must take into account this possibility and whether, as a result, it is even worth pursuing tree removal at this location in the first place.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew W. Minikowski, Esq.
Legal Fellow
Connecticut Fund for the Environment
aminikowski@ctenvironment.org
203-787-0646 (ex. 108)

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[34] Connecticut Airport Authority, *supra* note 2, at 4-3.
[35] *Id.* at 5-17.
[36] *See* Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee, "Use of Hartford-Brainard Airport's Site: Staff Findings and Recommendations Report," (Dec. 7, 2016), available at https://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/docs/2016/Full%20Report%20Brainard%20Site%20Use%20-%20Staff%20Report%20to%20Committee%20-%2011.30.16%20nf.pdf (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).
[37] Daniela Altimari, "Legislators Will Study Future of Hartford's Brainard Airport," *Hartford Courant* (July 22, 2016), available at http://www.courant.com/politics/hc-brainard-airport-future-20160722-story.html (last visited Jan. 22, 2017).

10 February 2017

Mr. Colin Goegel
Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

RE: *Comments Park Watershed Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation for the Tree Obstruction Removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport*

Dear Mr. Goegel,

Park Watershed is a 501c3 organization for citizen stewardship in the urban-suburban Park River regional watershed. Although a primary goal of Park Watershed as a the 501c3 organization is to assist with the implementation of the North Branch Park River Watershed Management Plan, the organizational area of Park Watershed includes the entire area of municipalities that overlap into the Park River regional watershed, which includes Hartford and Wethersfield, see http://www.parkwatershed.org/science/

Park Watershed is an active member of the Friends of Silvo O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge. Note also, Park Watershed has recently released a 2017 *Municipal Conservation Reference* developed with respect to lessons learned from the US Fish & Wildlife Service Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds. We are especially concerned about migratory bird habitat and erosion control along the Connecticut River. The final EA/EIE ought to include a summary of recent bash management reports, as well as a more detailed review of seasonal migratory bird habitat and a summary of how to best trim trees to increase safety without elimination of established bird habitat within the forest ecosystem. The Hartford Tree Commission has a robust Tree Ordinance, which will require compensation for trees eliminated, which is important for long term replacement of the ecosystem service benefits of the forest lost. More importantly, the City of Hartford has adopted new zoning regulations that include a *Connecticut River Overlay* zone, which will need to be acknowledged and its interests addressed in the final AE/EIE.

In general Park Watershed is supportive of City of Hartford *Connecticut River Overlay* zoning and Tree Ordinance the Ct Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as well as non-profit environmental organizations that routinely work along the Connecticut River, most notably the Connecticut River Watershed Council and The Nature Conservancy. We are also aware of Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound issues.

Please note that Park Watershed agrees with the request that there be a widely announced public information meeting held within the City of Hartford, ideally at a central location, such as Hartford Public Library. At that meeting questions regarding whether or not Brainard airport will continue to occupy primary riverfront property with the City of Hartford ought to be addressed. We appreciate the opportunity to comment upon the *Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation for the Tree Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport.*

Sincerely,

Mary Rickel Pelletier
Founding Director

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

The Nature Conservancy in Connecticut
55 Church Street, Third Floor
New Haven, CT 06510-3029

tel [203] 568-6270
fax [203] 568-6271

nature.org/connecticut

February 10, 2017

Mr. Colin Goegel, Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Dear Mr. Goegel,

My name is David Gumbart, and I am writing on behalf of The Nature Conservancy, regarding the Connecticut Airport Authority's (CAA) Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal for Hartford-Brainard Airport. The Nature Conservancy holds a conservation easement on land owned by the City of Hartford, in the Town of Wethersfield, immediately south of Brainard Airport. A portion of this easement land is where much of the currently proposed tree clearing would take place. The easement is recorded in the land records of the Town of Wethersfield, Volume 441, Page 251.

The Nature Conservancy is a worldwide conservation organization with the mission to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Connecticut, the Connecticut River and its tributaries are a focus of the Conservancy's work, with floodplain forest communities an integral part of the river's value. The area where tree clearing is proposed, known as Folly Brook, provides significant habitat for fish, wildlife and plants and has substantial value as a natural, scenic and educational resource. This floodplain forest also provides important benefits to the human community, such as water filtration, sediment capture and flood attenuation.

The easement we hold came about in response to the 1988 clear cutting of a part of Folly Brook by the Department of Transportation, for the purposes of maintaining airport safety. This easement does recognize that future vegetation management would be required to ensure airport safety, and the Conservancy understands and supports the need to maintain safe approach zones for air traffic. That said, we also want to ensure any cutting of trees and other vegetation is done so as to minimize the impact on the floodplain forest, preserving its value for nature and humans alike.

In section 5 of the easement, it states the City of Hartford and The Nature Conservancy "shall prepare a tree maintenance plan for the Protected Property." This plan was developed, and it established a map, with certain rights appurtenant to 4 distinct areas, labeled A – D (map attached). For section B, it states "The City and the Conservancy shall establish a written tree-cutting plan specific for this area" when future cutting is deemed necessary.

100% post consumer materials

The Nature Conservancy has been in contact with the City of Hartford, and together we will plan on conducting a site visit to Folly Brook in the coming weeks. Areas C and D on the tree maintenance plan map allow for only bona fide hazard trees to be removed; agreement on this is to be on a case-by case basis. Other than along an existing maintenance road, use of vehicles in areas C and D for tree maintenance activity is not allowed.

The Nature Conservancy, with its legal interest in the property subject to the current CAA plan, and through the easement's intent to conserve the natural values of the property, will work in a constructive and cooperative manner with the City of Hartford to address CAA's public safety concerns while ensuring Folly Brook's natural resources remain intact. Consultation with and input from the CAA during this process is expected.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the CAA Brainard Airport tree-clearing plan.

Sincerely,

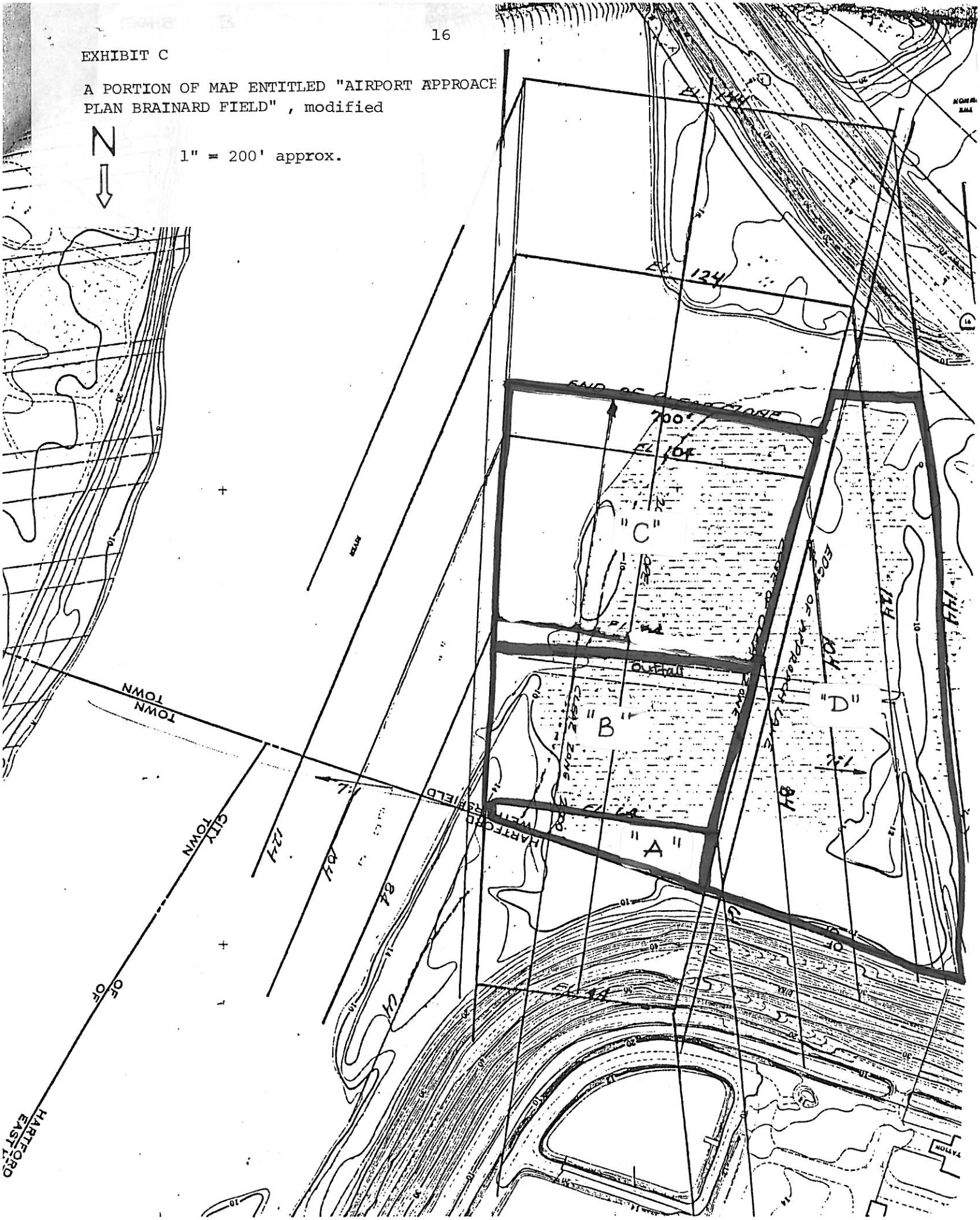
David Gumbart
Director of Land Management

EXHIBIT C

A PORTION OF MAP ENTITLED "AIRPORT APPROACH PLAN BRAINARD FIELD" , modified

N

1" = 200' approx.



KNOX
People Planting Programs

Mr. Colin Gogel, Senior Manager and Engineer
cgoegel@ctairports.org
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Dear Mr. Goegel,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation for selective tree removal in the vicinity of Brainard Airport. I provide comment today on behalf of KNOX, an organization working to reforest the city after years of neglect and injustice to its environment.

I would first like to endorse the letters of both the City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission and the Connecticut Fund for the Environment. While there is no need to entirely rehash their expert legal and environmental insights raised in regards to the draft, we would like to particularly reinforce the following concerns:

- Omission of the Hartford municipal tree ordinance and its impact on such an evaluation, especially in regards to replacement value of mature trees,
- Misclassification of various lands slated for selective removal, especially those with environmental protections,
- Misjudgment of how such work would impact the Connecticut River and riparian buffers along the Connecticut River,
- Lack of public outreach to residents, official stakeholders, and concerned stakeholders. We would add that the lack of a press release or any postings to social media in this day and age would show an initial aversion to public input.

Just given these four glaring issues regarding the draft submitted for public comment, we recommend that the draft be pulled and rewritten in partnership with representatives including the City of Hartford City Forester, the City's Planning and Zoning Commission, the Mayor's Office, and their counterparts in the Towns of Wethersfield, East Hartford, and Glastonbury.

In addition to these four issues, we would like to raise the following three overarching concerns as an agency that has worked in partnership with Hartford residents for over half a century around environmental issues and is on the front line of the decline and resurgence of Hartford's urban forest.

**1. Number of trees to be removed.** The draft makes no estimate (including a lack of an upper or lower limit) of the number of trees to be removed or their age, height, or contribution to the health of Hartford. The Connecticut Airport Authority was not able to provide any clarification on this question during the hearing. We do not understand how one can estimate the impact of tree

removal on an environment without such estimates. Furthermore, the omission of this information makes providing any comment on such a draft extremely difficult. When KNOX seeks to understand the value of a tree to the people and environment that surrounds it, we need to understand its age, height, species, and location. This is because mature trees provide the greatest benefit. Under Hartford's tree ordinance, an estimated number of trees to be removed would also inform the Connecticut Airport Authority's effort to mitigate environmental harm on a per-caliper-inch basis (as required by Hartford's municipal tree ordinance).

**2. Analyses of feasibility of mitigation strategy.** The draft does describe *some* steps to mitigate *some* environmental impacts (especially related to animal and bird species) among an untold number of trees. We have deep concern that any mitigation of environmental impact hinges upon a large, complex tree maintenance job occurring exactly right, in Connecticut, in early winter. There is often a disconnect between theory and practice, and this project fails to acknowledge or seek to ascertain whether such complex maintenance practices are possible and/or likely to be achieved in practice.

Without further explanation or analysis, we do not believe that the conclusions made regarding protecting protected species, wetlands, or the Connecticut River and its riparian buffer are valid. We therefore recommend further analyses be taken to ascertain whether the proposed mitigation measures are feasible for this area and this scope (once an estimated number of trees to be removed is ascertained).

**3.** The discussion of **environmental justice** and the impact of this work on the residents of Hartford is entirely inadequate. To quote the draft, "In regards to civil rights and environmental justice, the EPA defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." We assert that in Hartford, fair treatment and meaningful involvement would include outreach to those for whom Spanish is their language of choice. A Spanish-speaking person would certainly not be able to understand the presentation and question and answer session that has already occurred. We advise the Connecticut Airport Authority to review the following map provided by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, where Hartford, and specifically the area of Hartford near Brainard, is one of the two locations in all of Connecticut with the greatest number of Spanish speakers with limited English proficiency.

(http://www.ct.gov/dot/lib/dot/documents/dpolicy/title6maps/statewide_lep_spanish092013.pdf).

Furthermore, the section on environmental justice also fails to mention:

- Hartford's extraordinarily high asthma rate and relation of Hartford's urban forest to this issue,
- How the removal of these mature trees will impact quality of life, flow of storm water, or climate adaptability in the neighborhoods surrounding Brainard or the city,
- Whether <u>any</u> outreach to residents in the immediate surrounding neighborhoods was made. We would say this does not meet any threshold of "meaningful involvement."

KNOX
People Planting Programs

**Conclusion**
I personally found the consultant's attitude during the questions section of his presentation to be gravely worrisome. While someone's attitude is certainly subjective, I found his position to be one of defending the work already completed rather than an attitude that would seek to improve the document with comment and inclusion of both experts in the field and residents of all communities impacted by this work.

For example, the Connecticut Airport Authority's consultant's stance, and unwillingness to even consider another stance, that this work will have no impact on environmental justice in Hartford's communities show a lack of understanding of the current state of Hartford's environment or the past injustices done to residents in Hartford's southern neighborhoods related to air pollution and noise pollution. If that will continue to be the Connecticut Airport Authority's position on past, present, and future environmental analyses, I have honest concern that this assessment and impact statement was crafted and created without the local residents' or environment's best interests at heart. Recent conversation has led me to believe that Brainard is taking the concerns of various parties seriously, and I look forward to a rewritten draft.

I have been in contact with Alex Petersen, Manager of Government Affairs for Brainard Airport, who has told me that a) a public hearing will take place on this issue and b) that public comment will remain open until 30 days after such a hearing. I therefore submit this letter as a summary of KNOX's initial, major concerns with this draft and look forward to finding answers to these questions, as well as the many raised by the community, as Brainard Airport conducts further public outreach. I am hopeful this is the beginning of a productive, open conversation about the role of Brainard Airport and the urban forest in Hartford.

We do understand Brainard Airport's concerns for the safety of their pilots. We cannot understand how the safety of their pilots covers 40 acres of land or potentially thousands of trees. That level of tree clearing was certainly not substantiated as part of the draft.

Sincerely,

Ryan O'Halloran
Advancement and Marketing Director
KNOX, Inc.

**Date:** December 28, 2016 at 14:29:30 EST
**To:** geaston@chacompanies.com, cgoegel@ctairports.org, rloewenstein2@chacompanies.com, mparsons@ctairports.org, JMartelle@chacompanies.com
**Subject:** **Hartford Airport Comment**

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Jim |
| Last Name: | Woodworth |
| Question or comment? | Hello, I am a Wethersfield Resident (formerly of River Road) and Stewardship Chair of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust. I will be out of town on January 12 when your Public Information Meeting is Scheduled. However, I lead a series of "Brisk Winter Walks" sponsored by the GMCT, the EB Wolf Nature Center, and Goodwin College. Two of our walks will be in the areas of "Obstruction Removal" that are being planned. We would very much appreciate if a representative of the airport or of the Consultant doing the Environmental Impact study and planning the "obstruction removal" would be able to join us on these two walks to point out to us and to members of the public exactly what you have planned. The first walk is 10am, Sat., Jan 22, 2017 will enter the Folly Brook Nature area off of Hartford Avenue (an area owned by GMCT, and then walk up Hartford Avenue, through the gates past the South Pump Station, under 15 and I91 and over the dike, through Folly Brook Nature area to the River. The second, 10am Sat., Feb. 12 will enter Hockenum Meadows from High Street through a gate owned by Goodwin College and walk downstream along the River to what I call the "Wethersfield Triangle" where the Trust owns several parcels and a second area of "obstruction removal" will take place. I will offer these walks to concerned Wethersfield residents, and would very much like to be able to publicize the fact that a representative of the Airport authority would be accompanying us on our walk. I will make this information known to the local media, as well. Thank you so much! (BTW our complete walk schedule is here: http://www.gmct.org/programs.htm#ww2017) Sincerely, Ji-m Woodworth Stewardship Chair Great Meadows Conservation Trust |

---

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 11:48 AM
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Brendan |
| Last Name: | Mahoney |
| Question or comment? | Hi there, is written testimony being accepted for this and how does one submit it? Thanks, Brendan |

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 1:09 PM
**To:** Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Re: Hartford Brainard EA/EIE

Great. Thanks a lot.

Brendan

On Wed, Jan 11, 2017 at 1:03 PM, Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Brendan,

You can comment on the Hartford-Brainard Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for Obstruction Removal in the following ways:

- You can comment using the contacts section of the project website http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/contact/
- You can submit comments at the Public Information Meeting - details found here: http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/project-meetings/
- You can submit comments directly to the CAA: Mr. Colin Goegel, Senior Manager of Engineering

Connecticut Airports Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
CGoegel@ctairports.org

Please note: **Comments on this EA/EIE will be accepted until the close of business on**: **Friday, February 10, 2017**.

Thank you,

**Jean Loewenstein, AICP**
Principal Planner
**CHA** ~ *design/construction solutions*
Office: (518) 453-8771
jloewenstein@chacompanies.com
www.chacompanies.com

January 11, 2017

Dear members of the Connecticut Airport Authority, and other relevant parties:

My name is Kerri Provost and I am a resident of Hartford, CT. I oppose the excessive removal of trees as outlined in the Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal Hartford-Brainard Airport document published in December 2016.

First, I want to say that because this meeting was arranged with such short notice, I am unable to personally attend the meeting.

Regardless, having looked over the 96-page document, I find no compelling reason for why acres of trees should be removed. I say “acres” because your own plan puts forth several possibilities: 74 acres or 40 acres. Neither scenario is acceptable.

Hartford has one of — if not *the* — highest rates of asthma in Connecticut. This is not asthma that we deal with by simply handing an inhaler to a kid and telling her to sit out the rest of her soccer game. The data reveals a high number of emergency room visits and hospitalizations. For data, I refer you to the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Guess what helps to reduce asthma rates? Trees.

For more information on that, go to the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment & Planting Plan that was developed for the City of Hartford and local non-profit KNOX, by American Forests in partnership with Davey Resource Group.

Your plan mentions asthmatics exactly once and then dodges the subject entirely.

The question is why this plan is necessary. Had we been experiencing plane crashes frequently, it may make sense to trade one person’s travel safety (preventing crashes) for another’s long term health (asthma). But in recent memory, the only crash was one that the news media reports as being caused by a suicidal student pilot. One several years before that, which thankfully resulted in no fatalities, was caused by a landing gear failure.

An abundance of caution should be applied, but if we look at those two recent examples, prevention would have involved mechanical inspections and mental health screenings.

Thanks,
Kerri Provost

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Bernadine |
| Last Name: | Silvers |
| Question or comment? | I am writing to testify against the proposal of the Connecticut Airport Authority to cut down acres and acres of trees in our urban environment. By way of background, I am a longtime resident of the Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood of the City of Hartford. I am active in a number of civic organizations, including Hartford 2000, the Hartford Redevelopment Agency (where I am a mayoral appointee), and CSS/CON Neighborhood Revitalization Zone. Trees are our environmental lungs and filters. The Sheldon/Charter Oak Community is already burdened with terrible smells from the Plant adjacent to Brainard Field. I am concerned that once the trees are removed, the air quality will be worse, and the odors will be more frequent and more intense. Little to no serious attention has been paid to the matter of odor control in the draft environmental impact analysis, despite the fact that there is a nearby Plant well known to produce strong smells. For those reasons, I believe that the environmental impact analysis is legally deficient. Many residents, living in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods within blocks of Brainard Field, would no doubt feel the same way and express these doubts if this meeting were better publicized and held in a Hartford location. Our defense of these trees highlights our shared concern about whether environmental justice is truly served when the needs of our most vulnerable citizens are not even considered. Thank you for your consideration. |

**From:** Peace, Kimberly R.
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 4:34 PM
**To:** Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Cc:** Molly Parsons <mparsons@ctairports.org>; McDonnell, Paul <PMcDonnell@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** RE: NDDB review 201607290 - October 2, 2016 comment letter

Hi- sorry for the delayed response, but as a follow up, we did have a site visit with Laura Saucier from CTDEEP Wildlife on November 15 to discuss the potential impacts to the polygon identified as Sand/Pine Barren habitat. It was agreed on that date that removal within that polygon would be conducted as follows:

No soil addition, loaming or seeding
Removal of mature hardwoods (except scrub oak) and mature white pines of any size
Removal of only those pitch pines that are determined to be tall enough to be obstructions
Understory vegetation will be left in place, including immature pitch pines and scrub oaks
No stump removal
Stumps will be ground to surface, grinding remains/chips will be removed off-site

No forestry mulching
A forester or qualified botanist will identify the different species of trees in order to ensure correct species are removed
CAA agreed to investigating the potential for a prescribed burn of the understory vegetation, which would enhance type of habitat- coordination with CTDEEP would occur at that time to clearly identify to goals of the prescribed burn
Trees will be re-evaluated for removal on a 10-year cycle, pitch pines could be removed once they reach a height of over 25 feet

A maintenance plan detailing these discussion points will be submitted to CTDEEP for their approval.

With regard to the bird habitat restrictions, we will adhere to the TOY restrictions for state-listed bird species, work will be conducted between September 1 and May 1.

To meet their concerns over water quality and potential impacts to brook floater and eastern pondmussel, it was noted in the wetland permit application:

"The project is located over 725 feet from Stony Brook and 460 feet from DeGraves Brook. However, stringent water quality protection measures will be used during removal of trees in the wetlands at the northern extent of the project area to ensure protection of these resources and that the project will not add to the impairments Stony Brook and/or impact the habitat of state and federally listed freshwater mussels."

**Kimberly R. Peace**

**From:** Tony Koos
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 2:02 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Testimony for Brainard Aiport Hearing 1/12/2017

To Whom it May Concern:

I have a conflict tonight, however:

Many of the cities of our nation turned their backs to nearby waterways by polluting them and by creating buildings that literally faced the opposite direction. In Hartford, we have made and are continuing to make significant strides to protect and enhance our city's connection to the adjacent and state's largest waterway.
Adriaen's landing connects the science center, constitution plaza and downtown to the Connecticut River and attracts hundreds of thousands of people a year.

This area is finally returning to a healthy state with bald eagles returning and now frequently being visible in the old growth trees along the river. As a Hartford resident, it is one of our greatest assets along with the ecology it requires, especially these trees.
They protect and promote revitalization of the natural habitat. This is an airport that serves few but these changes will impact many. The City's Planning and Zoning department has this area targeted for development that will increase access to our river and reduce the scarring of the past.

It is a shame this was not well publicized as I know of many people that are enjoying the resurgence of the river and would be particularly bothered. I strongly oppose this proposal.

Best Regards,

Tony Koos
Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT

**Sent:** Friday, January 13, 2017 4:42 PM
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Anthony |
| Last Name: | Cherolis |
| Question or comment? | This is my public comment in response to the Draft Environmental Assessment for the tree removal project for Brainard Airport: I want Brainard Airport to be successful and safe. Having a well-used and busy municipal airport is integral to our regional economy. What concerns me are the following items:<br>• The airport is in Hartford, and most of the trees marked for removal are in Hartford. The City of Hartford owns the parcel of land where the trees are being removed in Wethersfield. The entirety of the airport is within Hartford. 21% of Hartford residents almost never have access to a car for transportation. It is unclear to me if Hartford City Council members, our Mayor, or state representatives (John Fonfara) were formally invited to this session with enough time that they could make plans to attend. It is very problematic that this info session was scheduled in Wethersfield without a 2nd event planned for Hartford. I recommend a 2nd event in Hartford at the Hartford Public Library.<br>• I did not see mitigation such as replacement tree plantings in similar environments in either Wethersfield or Hartford. The reduced mature tree cover will also reduce the carbon capture benefit. I have trouble understanding how this is an environmental impact study didn't recommend replacing trees removed in other, similar open space to preserve a mature forested environment.<br>• The zoning regulation for Hartford in the report dates from 2008. Hartford's zoning regulations were significantly updated in January 2016. I believe the zoning map identifies the Hartford areas with tree removal as Open Space, and that has not changed. The 2016 zoning regulation discusses tree removal and requirements for replacement.<br>• The zoning update includes bike route network that includes Maxim Road and Brainard Road with a plan to incorporate a multi-use path on the top of the levy. The path would ideally connect to Hartford Road in Wethersfield by following the existing paved MDC road. As mitigation for the severe tree removal that the airport authority and the MDC should work together to make this public river access and transportation connection a reality. This would be a regional asset for both Wethersfield and Hartford. Brainard Airport would benefit from increased public support if adjacent residents (that weren't pilots) had the benefit of enjoying that beautiful section of riverfront – while watching the planes take off and land. As I understand it, y'all could benefit for more public support considering the grand list benefits |

Hartford would see if the airport were closed and developed more densely.

• Unmitigated tree removal around Brainard Airport most definitely has a negative environmental justice impact in the City of Hartford. Removing significant mature tree canopy (40 acres) on the same side of town as the Trash to Energy plant, the airport, and the water treatment facility is an environmental detriment in a low income city and neighborhood. The City of Hartford has astronomical youth asthma rates, and reduced mature tree canopy within Hartford will likely detract from overall air quality. The negative generators of pollutants (energy facility, trash fumes, airport, and the water treatment plant) will be more likely to blow over into the adjacent Southend and South Green neighborhoods with fewer trees to reduce wind speeds. The water quality of the Connecticut river will be negatively impacted due to increased runoff and erosion. I implore the CAA to work more closely with the City of Hartford to identify mitigation that will offset the negative impact and increase public access to the Connecticut River. Your organization clearly started off on the wrong foot on January 12th, but I believe the error is recoverable if the agency takes an integrated and open approach. The City of Hartford could decide to reject all permits related to the tree removals and let the airport die. That seems like a rash approach, but I wouldn't be surprised if it occurred if the CAA continued to pursue this project without a significant improvement in community engagement and mitigation. I would be rather working to support this project and the mitigation plan than be working to line up opposition. Where I end up depends on how I see the CAA proceeding to the next steps.

# Officials Question Tree Plan

## Proposal Would Trim 40 Acres To Improve Visibility For Pilots

By KATHLEEN McWILLIAMS kmcwilliams@courant.com

WETHERSFIELD — A proposal by the Connecticut Airport Authority to trim 40 acres of trees on the banks of the Connecticut River met heavy resistance Thursday night from Hartford officials, lawmakers, residents and environmental activists from across the state.

The meeting in Wethersfield addressed plans to thin about 40 acres of trees on Hartford property near Brainard Airport to improve visibility for pilots. All of those trees interfere with the flight path, according to the airport authority.

“We’re trying to balance safety with environmental concerns and minimize cost and private property concerns,” consultant Paul McDonnell said Thursday.

McDonnell said during the environmental assessment presentation that tree clearing in that area is essential to clear the airspace, according to federal regulations.

“Not doing anything puts a lot of liability on the table,” McDonnell said. “Connecticut is required to address safety and this is their attempt.”

The presentation Thursday was one of the first steps taken by the airport authority to improve safety conditions, he said, and is far from a done deal. The authority will continue to collect comments and concerns from the public until February, and additional public hearings could be held in Hartford, Wethersfield and Glastonbury.

McDonnell said the tree removal could be simply cutting the tops off the trees or thinning the number of trees. The removal method has not been determined, he said.

But a main concern from residents and lawmakers was that the communities affected by the tree removal were not invited to or included in Thursday night's presentation.

Mayor Luke Bronin said Hartford had not been notified of the plan before Thursday night and found out about the presentation through a third party.

"I simply want to say I have significant concerns about this proposal," Bronin said. "I would have hoped that before this presentation there would have been a meeting in my office ... when you cut trees down, you don't get them back."

Rep. Tony Guerrera, D-Wethersfield, had similar concerns.

"First of all, I am concerned by what I saw here ... I do believe a full blown public hearing is needed here with the city of Hartford and Wethersfield residents. To me, there's a lot going on here and there are a lot of questions," he said.

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**Sent:** Saturday, January 14, 2017 6:58 PM
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

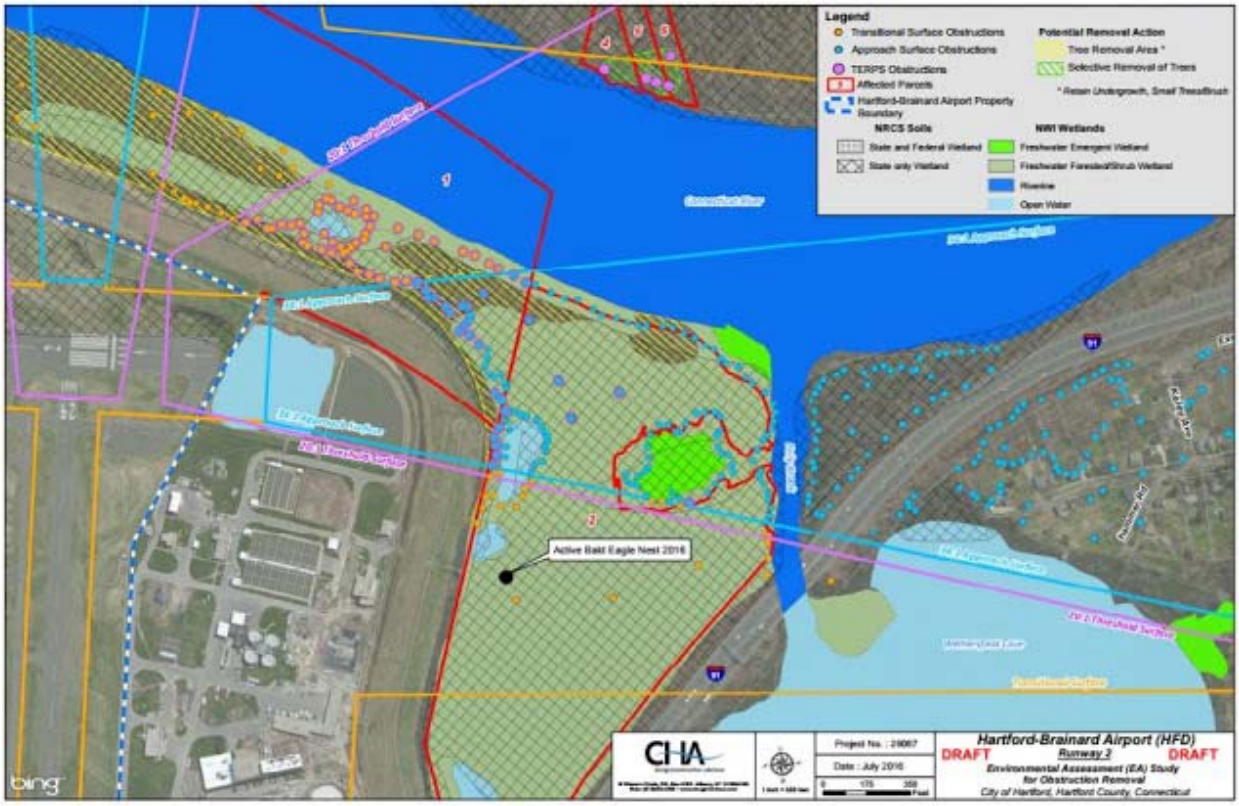
| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Wildaliz |
| Last Name: | Bermudez |
| Question or comment? | As as City Councilwoman for Hartford Court of Common Council, I do not want to see 40 acres of mature trees along the Connecticut River - mostly in designated wetlands - cut, ostensibly so that pilots can land their planes a little easier. You held the meeting on Thursday, in Wethersfield although the majority of the trees are in Hartford. If you do this there would be a devastating effect to bird and wildlife habitat, to the ecosystem, to erosion control and wetlands management, to recreational trail planning, and even to flood control. The smells from the trash burning plant, filtered by these trees, could get even worse. WE don't want to see this occur at all. Regards, Wildaliz Bermudez 860-310-7875 Hartford City Councilwoman Member of the Parks, Rec and Environment Committee |

17th January

# Doing Exactly the Wrong Things - Brainard Airport

If I were a proponent of Hartford's Brainard Airport [http://www.courant.com/politics/hc-brainard-airport-future-20160722-story.html] , I would be doing my best to engage neighborhood organizations to create advocates that understand the economic benefits and amenities that the small airfield brings to the city and the region. Brainard Airport is in many ways hidden from view in the South Meadows industrial area. I would guess that only 2 in 10 Hartford residents even know we have an airport inside city limits. An enterprising restaurant, The Flying Monkey [http://www.facebook.com/theflyingmonkeygrillbar] , just opened up at the airport, but the connectivity to patrons is tenuous.

The airport isolates a mile of prime Connecticut riverfront access. The dike that flanks the river would be an ideal multi-use path to connect residents to Hartford's beautiful natural spaces. Hartford residents are unaware of the airport, and therefore unlikely to support airport associated projects that have negative environmental impacts. Hartford residents and organizations get no benefit from the riverfront frontage isolated by the airport, and can be easily convinced that closing the airport and developing that land would increase access and bolster Hartford's tax base. With this background, consider how the Connecticut Airport Authority might then do exactly the wrong things with regards to a requirement to manage the height of trees around the airport.



Removing trees in the flood plains and along the Hartford riverfront. Adjacent to active Bald Eagle nesting site.

The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) recently held a public info session [http://www.courant.com/community/wethersfield/hc-wethersfield-airport-hearing-0113-20170112-story.html] that presented the results of a required environmental impact study [http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/project-documents/] on the removal of trees that are hemming in the airport runways and creating hazards for pilots. Here is where they did exactly the wrong things.

- **Wrong Location -** The public meeting and presentation was held in Wethersfield. The airport is in Hartford. Most of the trees being removed are in Hartford. Hartford even owns the parcel of property in Wethersfield where some trees are being proposed for removal.
- **Public Notice Shortfall -** Public notice of the meeting was significantly lacking. Many elected and institutional members in the audience noted they they had only learned of the meeting 2-3 days beforehand, and via a third party that was advocating for more attendees.
- **Outdated and Incorrect -** The environmental impact study referred to a 2008 version of the Hartford zoning regulations (they were significantly updated in January 2016). The report did not mention any of Hartford's requirements for mitigation of tree removal. Attendees also noted that the report included incorrect distances between the tree removal and residential housing and schools.
- **Blind to Environmental Justice Impacts -** The environmental impact study specifically noted that the removal of 40 acres of trees would have zero "Environmental Justice" impacts in a neighborhood that is already home to the Trash to Energy plant, the airport (sound and exhaust), and the MDC Sewage Treatment plant. Hartford has an astounding youth asthma rate (41% as noted in this NY Times article [http://www.nytimes.com/2000/08/20/nyregion/high-rate-of-asthma-for-hartford-children.html] ). How can the removal of 40 acres of trees not have an environmental justice impact?
- **No Mitigation Identified -** The environmental impact study included no mention at all of mitigating activities, such as planting of trees in Hartford parks or contributing funds to the Hartford tree fund. The 40 acres was estimated to cause removal of 2,600 mature trees by Jack Hale. Jack's estimate (absent any provided by the consultant) noted that the loss of mature trees would require planting 10,400 3" diameter trees or a $5.2 million contribution to Hartford's tree fund. How could mitigation, and the associated expense, be left out of the report?
- **No Explanation of the Airport's Benefits -** The report focused only on the necessity of tree removal without appreciating that the attending crowd would have been well served by a couple of slides on the economic benefit to the city and region. Standing on it's own, the tree removal proposal is bitter medicine. No sweetener was provided, and the airport authority paid dearly in public opinion.

Why not increase riverfront access and connectivity?

While we are considering removing (or thinning) 40 acres worth of mature forest, why not open up the conversation to address the isolated riverfront? Hartford's riverfront path system, a gem and growing attraction for residents and visitors, could be expanded by two miles and connected directly to Wethersfield. If the Connecticut Airport Authority were savvy, they would look at how a proposal like this could be connected to the required tree maintenance to mitigate the negative impacts and improve public opinion about the airport. This would be a step in the right direction.

**You can make your voice heard here -** Contact Form [http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/contact/] .

Posted 17th January by Tony C

Labels: airport, Coltsville, Connecticut River, connections

1 View comments

**Kerri** January 17, 2017 at 10:21 AM

For funsies, here's a copy of the statement I sent to KNOX to pass along to the CAA last week, as I could not make the meeting on such short notice:

"I oppose the excessive removal of trees as outlined in the Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal Hartford-Brainard Airport document published in December 2016.

First, I want to say that because this meeting was arranged with such short notice, I am unable to personally attend the meeting.

Regardless, having looked over the 96-page document, I find no compelling reason for why acres of trees should be removed. I say “acres” because your own plan puts forth several possibilities: 74 acres or 40 acres. Neither scenario is acceptable.

Hartford has one of — if not the — highest rates of asthma in Connecticut. This is not asthma that we deal with by simply handing an inhaler to a kid and telling her to sit out the rest of her soccer game. The data reveals a high number of emergency room visits and hospitalizations. For data, I refer you to the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Guess what helps to reduce asthma rates? Trees.

For more information on that, go to the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment & Planting Plan that was developed for the City of Hartford and local non-profit KNOX, by American Forests in partnership with Davey Resource Group.

Your plan mentions asthmatics exactly once and then dodges the subject entirely.

The question is why this plan is necessary. Had we been experiencing plane crashes frequently, it may make sense to trade one person’s travel safety (preventing crashes) for another’s long term health (asthma). But in recent memory, the only crash was one that the news media reports as being caused by a suicidal student pilot. One several years before that, which thankfully resulted in no fatalities, was caused by a landing gear failure.

An abundance of caution should be applied, but if we look at those two recent examples, prevention would have involved mechanical inspections and mental health screenings."

**From:** Brendan Mahoney
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:09 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Hartford-Brainard Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for Obstruction Removal

Dear Mr. Goegel,
I am writing in reference to the proposed tree clearing with respect to Brainard Airport. I was unable to attend the recent public hearing/info session, but I have review the available materials on the project's website. The email comes to inform you of my firm opposition to the project. No data or evidence supports the removal of this many trees. When pressed by local community stakeholders, no justification has been provided.

I worked for a time for the Hartford City Council and while there I co-authored the City's tree ordinance. That piece of legislation codified residents' desire to sustain the urban forest. It created a permitting process for tree removal and mandated the replacement, with either more trees or payment into a tree fund, of those removed trees. It does not appear that anyone has sought to follow these regulations, nor does it appear that anyone is following the spirit of the ordinance's precepts. To wit, from the purpose and findings of the ordinance:

The City of Hartford is characterized by its rich heritage of trees. Hartford's Trees clean the air, calm traffic, increase property values, reduce storm water run-off, and otherwise enhance the quality of life. The goal of this ordinance is to maintain and grow Hartford's urban forest, maintain Trees in a healthy condition, protect existing Trees, and mitigate losses and damage to Hartford's Trees.

In 2007, the City of Hartford, the Knox Parks Foundation, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and the United States Forestry Service conducted a survey of the City of Hartford's Trees. This survey revealed that the City has approximately four hundred fifty thousand (450,000) Trees that cover about twenty-six (26%) percent of the City's landmass. That is almost four (4) Trees for each resident. Together, they remove two thousand four hundred (2,400) tons of carbon and seventy-three (73) tons of other pollutants from the air each year. Because Hartford has the highest asthma rate in the state, the fact that the removed pollutants include thirty-seven (37) tons of particulate matter, a major asthma trigger, is especially important. Cooling provided by the Trees reduces energy use in the City by one thousand eight hundred (1,800) megawatt hours each year. The estimated replacement value of these Trees is about five hundred ninety million dollars ($590,000,000.00), an amount equal to about twenty-two (22%) percent of the gross value of the municipality's Real Property Grand List. The largest and oldest Trees, only twelve (12%) percent of the total number of Trees, provide fifty (50%) percent of the total tree canopy cover. Due to their age and vulnerability, it is clear that Hartford's urban forest is in jeopardy if these Trees are not maintained and more Trees are not planted each year.

I know that the other surrounding towns do not have the same sort of legislation, but they agree in principal to the aims of this legislation. Without a doubt, the goals of keeping aircraft safe can be met without the wanton removal of trees. Hartford gives up a lot of its usable land to a tax-exempt entity like the CCA's Brainard Airport. (I understand that aircraft there are subject to property taxes, but the value of the land itself far, far outstrips the revenue from the aircraft registered in Hartford.) It needs to be a

good neighbor and respect the laws that Hartford creates for itself in order to augment the quality of life for all residents.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Very truly yours,
Brendan Mahoney

---

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2017 14:15
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>

**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Leigh |
| Last Name: | Standish |
| Question or comment? | I far prefer the airport as a neighbor, than the proposed "Hartford South" intensive real estate development1 |

---

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2017 10:04 AM
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Beth |
| Last Name: | Iacampo |
| Question or comment? | You have much more work to do to convince the residents of Wethersfield and Hartford that this is a sound plan. |

---

**From:** Betty Standish
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2017 9:55 AM
**To:** Easton, Glenn <GEaston@chacompanies.com>; cgoegel@ctairports.org; Loewenstein, Jean <RLoewenstein2@chacompanies.com>; mparsons@ctairports.org; Martelle Sr, Jeremy <JMartelle@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** Hartford Airport Comment

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Betty |
| Last Name: | Standish |
| Question or comment? | We believe this tree cutting is illegal based on the questionable status of Brainard Airport going forward. This airport is being used by a select few (not benefiting the population in and around Hartford), does not add a tax base to Hartford and sits on a valuable piece of property. |

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Carol |
| Last Name: | Szymanski |
| Question or comment? | I am adamantly opposed to the tree clear cutting plan which will adversely affect wildlife including endangered eagles, noise pollution, erosion control, heat island effect and visual impacts. The proposed plan is irresponsible and single-minded. It hurts the environment and neighbors. It is not a plan anyone can live with. Any trees that are removed should be replaced with another planted tree. This is not an urban moonscape but a delicate ecosystem where people exist in harmony with nature. |

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | cynthia |
| Last Name: | greenblatt |
| Question or comment? | Both the EA and EIE you presented in Wethersfield contained errors, inconsistencies and were noteworthy for their omissions. I reject the conclusions of your study. By your own reserach there is no reason for the drastic proposal to cut 40 acres of trees in Wethersfield and Hartford in the name of aviation safety as few trees penetrate the airspace. Your conclusions that there would be no significant impact to the floodplain, to wildlife, to plant life, to pollution, to the CT River and to property values are insulting and ludicrous. Bradley Airport is 12 miles from Brainard and Brainard costs taxpayers 1.03 million dollars a year to operate. This airport should be closed. |

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Jeff |
| Last Name: | Bridges |
| Question or comment? | What is formal address to mailing comments on the Environmental Assessment? Who should those comments be addressed to? Thank you Jeff Bridges |

Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 3:17 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Public Comment on Brainerd Airport Tree Obstruction Removal draft EIA and EIE.

I would like to comment in note form, to make it simpler for me and for you. Thank-you

I attended the Public Information Session at the Wethersfield Town Hall on January 12th, because I heard about it at the very last minute. Thank-you for allowing the public to make comments now.
I think there was violation of the NEPA and of CEPA:
This meeting was very poorly announced:
The following groups did not know about the meeting: Hartford's Mayor's office, The Tree Commission, Knox, or the City Forester, the Hartford Public Works Department, The Nature Conservancy, CT Forest and Parks Assoc. Riverfront Recapture, CRCoG, or CT Fund for the Environment, all obvious, interested parties. I heard about it at the last minute from a friend at KNOX, through his attendance at the City of Hartford Climate Stewardship Council meeting.
I don't think that the abutters were informed of the meeting.
In the end, the meeting was well attended. There is a lot of interest in this issue. There should be a public hearing, and you should be well prepared for it.
The CT Airport Authority apparently was not aware of the new zoning passed in the last few months. There is no excuse for this.
Were you aware of the Hartford Tree Commission's Tree Ordinance?
It is VERY difficult (and very expensive) to cut trees in wetlands, without doing extreme damage to the wetlands.
The draft EIE is extremely weak. One must look at the whole picture: the impact on wildlife, the Eagle's nests (you did mention these), the impact to the wetlands. If you cut trees, it creates new Early Successional Habitat (ESH) which is beautiful habitat for birds. More birds = more bird/propeller danger.
The impact of cutting down trees is great on health. The area already has the sewage treatment plant and the incinerator. The trees are essential to mitigate the effects on the air that is breathed. These large trees will be impossible to replace, even with mitigation. The asthma rates in Hartford are very high.
There will be a bad heat-island effect, with fewer trees as well as less cleaning of the air by the transpiration of the leaves of the trees that are there now.
If there is a flight plan for planes to come down the river, that should be enforced, way before the trees are cut down so that the planes can come into the airport over the land.
All the abutters of the CT River must be good stewards of the land and air and water beside them. Good stewardship is much more than just meeting permit goals.
The residents of the City of Hartford should have access to the river in this area. Could access be included in the plan?
I believe that there should be mitigation for the trees you are going to cut. Maybe this could be providing access to the water for the public.
There should have been a long term maintenance plan/stewardship put in place when the airport was commissioned. If it wasn't done then, it should certainly be done now. Trees are much easier to cut when they have smaller trunks and are attended to more often. Cutting them now, at such a large size, is difficult and their removal makes a much bigger impact, which is also much more expensive. So, I recommend a long term maintenance plan from now on out.
Maybe this whole idea should be shelved until the final plan by the City of Hartford for the future of the airport is determined. Why waste taxpayers money with extra work, when it might be for naught.
Thank-you for reading my suggestions.
Barbara David

The following statement was endorsed by the City of Hartford Tree Advisory Commission at its meeting on February 1, 2017

**Statement by Jack Hale, Chair, Hartford Tree Advisory Commission**
**Regarding Brainard Airport Obstruction Removal Environmental Impact**

The purpose of the Tree Advisory Commission is to protect and improve Hartford's urban forest.
As chair, I am concerned about this loss of trees described in the draft report presented on January 12, 2017.

With short time frame and no public access to the property, I've had to make some rough approximations, but here's what I think.

It appears that there are somewhere upwards of 2600 mature trees in the 40 acres that would be cleared under the preferred plan. That's based on an assumption that there are about 15 trees per 10,000 square foot (100x100) section. Actual number is likely more than that, but it is a usable number for our purposes. Let's say that they average 12 inches in diameter. The Cottonwoods are bigger and the maples are smaller. The crowns are probably 50-60 feet high, and that is the issue for aircraft.

The report says that there will be no impact on air quality from this project. In fact, these trees, based on an i-Tree analysis remove about 2100 lbs. of pollutants from the air each year for a value of about $6,000. The i-Tree program is a system of applications developed by the U.S. Forest Service to quantify forests and analyze there environmental impacts.

The report also says that there will also be no impact on run-off, but i-Tree analysis suggests that these trees prevent about 1/2 million gallons of rain run-off each year with a value of about $4,400.

Please don't hold me to these numbers exactly. I don't have access to reliable data, so these are all very rough estimates.

So, based on the same i-Tree analysis, the total value of environmental services provided by the 40 acres of forest each year is probably about $14,000.

We don't want to cause plane crashes, but we do need to take into account the value lost to the citizens of the City of Hartford and surrounding towns by this massive tree removal. For context, note that the number of trees to be removed is about 3 times the number of trees normally lost in a year in Hartford due to storms, old age, and disease. In Hartford we have had a robust planting program, but we continue to lose ground, particularly because the trees lost, such as the ones you propose to take down, are much larger than the ones we can plant.

Because of that, our tree ordinance indicates that when projects require removal of trees, they must be replaced, not 1-for-1, but inch-for-inch. That is often not possible to be done within the footprint of a project, so we have a way for people to buy out of the replacement requirement. Funds go into the Hartford Tree Fund in the City Treasurer's office, and they can be used to fund planting throughout the city. For a sense of scale, if there are about 2600 trees with an average diameter of 12 inches in the 40-

acre project area, the total tree diameter is upwards of 31,000. If those were to be replaced with 3-inch trees, we are talking about roughly 10,500 trees. The cost per tree is typically $500, so the total bill would be around $5.2 million. An alternative would be to have the trees appraised by a licensed tree appraiser and pay that amount. We recommend that these environmental impacts and replacement costs be taken into account as further discussion of this proposed project occurs.

That's the general situation. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have, and I look forward to hearing how you would like to proceed.

---

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Jim |
| Last Name: | Felice |
| Question or comment? | Do not appreciate planes flying right over my house. Am totally against enlarging or increasing traffic at Brainard. |

---

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Anne |
| Last Name: | Skarbek |
| Question or comment? | Planes and small jets consistently fly over our home when approaching the airport, very few actually fly in over the river. We have lived here for over 40 years, nothing ever changes, and calling the airport is never productive. Rarely speak to anyone. |

---

**From:** Miriam Mennin
**Sent:** Monday, February 06, 2017 4:25 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** r emoval of trees

I strongly object to the removal of healthy trees along the Conneciticut River near the Hartford-Brainard airport which is being proposed by the FAA and the CAA. Find another area if you need more land for the airport. As stated in the Connecticut Fund for the Environment letter to you, these agencies have not fully taken into the environmental impact of such action.

sincerely,
Miriam Mennin
Greenwich Ct
Board Member of the Greenwich Tree Conservancy( I write for myself not for the entire Board)
RTM representative, District 12, to the Land Use Committee

---

**Sent:** Monday, February 06, 2017 3:18 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation for Tree Obstruction Removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport

Mr. Colin Goegel
Senior Manager of Engineering
Connecticut Airport Authority

Dear Mr. Goegel,

I am writing in support of the comments submitted by the Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE") and its bi-state program Save the Sound by Andrew W. Minikowski, Esq. dated January 25, 2017. As a member of Connecticut Fund for the Environment I support a strong science based evaluation of the proposal and ask that you carefully consider each of the points raised in Mr. Minikowski's letter.

In addition I would stress that global warming is the most serious and an urgent threat to human life and prosperity. It is important that we do whatever is possible to reduce global warming and preserve our existing water resources. When uncertain we should always lean toward the more conservative actions because the results of the alternative may be disastrous.

Thank you for your work and for consideration of this matter,

Royal Graves

**From:** Brooke Girty
**Sent:** Monday, February 06, 2017 3:45 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:**

As a lifelong resident of Connecticut, I find the latest proposal from the FAA and CAA disturbing in it's lack of thought. There is bird habitat for threatened and endangered species that should be protected. There is little analysis for environmental buffers and concerns for the runoff, erosion and sedimentation. There is also a lack of appropriate notice.

I have lived along the Connecticut River for many years, and the wildlife and beauty of the river is the best reason to be in Connecticut. The idea that you would harm this ecosystem is horrible.

I urge you to turn down the proposal based on the lack of appropriate analysis of the environmental consequences of this proposal.

I will continue to speak out on this issue in all venues open to me as this is a very important issue.

Thank you for your consideration,
Brooke Girty

---

**From:** Sara C.Bronin
**Sent:** Monday, February 06, 2017 2:04 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** CAA Individual Testimony

Hello,

Please see my comments, with the attached three documents and zoning map, on the CAA proposal to cut down 40 acres of trees.

Thank you,
Sara Bronin

# Hartford's Urban Forest – the Challenge

Hartford is a city in a forest. Over a quarter of its area is covered by trees, and that is remarkable because about half of the city is covered with buildings, pavement, or water.

A "tree canopy survey" conducted during the summer of 2007 provided that information and more. It indicated how valuable our urban forest is for pollution reduction, energy conservation and other purposes.

Based on survey results, Hartford is challenged to learn more about our urban forest, to plant many more trees in a thoughtful and effective way, to maintain its stock of large, valuable trees, and to protect important trees from damage or loss.

## The Survey of Hartford's Trees

The City of Hartford, Knox Parks Foundation, the US Forest Service and the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Forestry participated in this tree canopy survey of the City's urban forest. The data collection and analysis method, called UFORE (Urban Forest Effects), has the potential to inform and direct efforts on behalf of the trees of Hartford for a while to come – if we take advantage of what the survey shows us.

Four college interns hired by the Knox Parks Foundation collected the data used in this survey. Data came from 200 sample points randomly selected throughout the city by the City of Hartford's Department of Public Works, using the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. The US Forest Service provided the funding for this project through a grant awarded and administered by DEP Forestry. DEP Forestry also contributed its technical expertise to the survey.

**Hartford's Urban Forest - a Summary**

**Number of Trees:** 568,000

**Number of Larger Trees** (over 20" in diameter): 55,000

**Most Common Trees:** red maple, tree of heaven, black cherry, American elm and red oak

**Tree Canopy Cover:** 26%

**Amount of Carbon Removed by Hartford's Trees Annually:** 2,440 tons

**Amount of Major Air Pollutants Removed Annually:** 73 tons

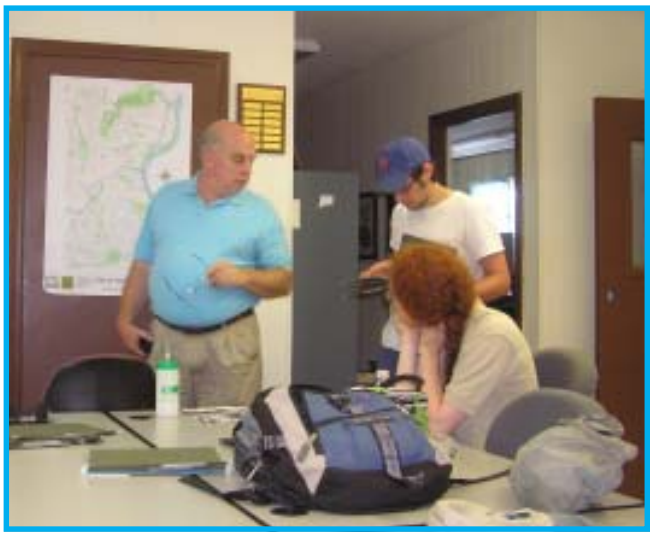
**Oil Saved due to Energy Reduction by These Trees:** 2,400 barrels a year

**Replacement Cost for These Trees:** $590 million dollars

## What We Learned

Viewed from above, about 26% of the total surface area of Hartford is covered by trees. This canopy cover compares favorably with other major cities in the Northeast, including Boston (22%), New York (21%) and Washington DC (29%). Of the remaining surface area, about 16% could be planted with trees and so, potentially, be used to increase the city's canopy cover.

As for the actual ground cover, the survey showed that 28% of Hartford is maintained grass, while 26% is covered by asphalt. Buildings make up 11% of Hartford's surface area while water, including the Connecticut River, makes up 4% of the rest. Approximately 40% of the City's surface area is covered by materials impermeable to penetration by water.



Hartford has roughly 568,000 trees, counting every tree trunk greater than 1 inch in diameter (dbh). If only the larger trees (above 4 inches in diameter) are counted, the city has about 268,000 trees; of these approximately 55,000 are greater than 20 inches in diameter. These largest trees, although less than 10% of the total number of trees, account for about 50% of the total tree canopy. The largest tree found during the sample is a silver maple that is 54 inches dbh, while the tallest tree is a 138 foot tall cottonwood. The replacement value for these trees in sum total would run about $590,000,000!

The most common tree in Hartford is the red maple, followed by the tree of heaven, black cherry, American elm and red oak. If the criterion is greatest leaf area rather than most individuals (important because leaves do the most to reduce pollution and provide shade) – red maple still ranks first, followed by silver maple, pin oak, American beech and red oak. Interestingly, Norway maple, often mentioned as a tree that is over-planted and invasive, only comes in 7th on the list of most common trees, and does not make the top ten for leaf area.

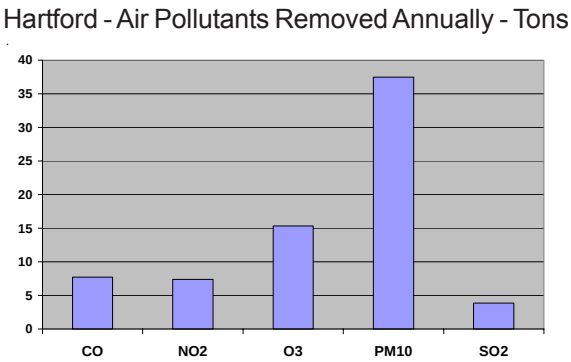
## What These Trees Do

While the benefits of Hartford's trees based on this survey are still being analyzed, some early results are apparent. Hartford's trees store about 143,000 tons of carbon, and continue to remove carbon from the atmosphere at about the rate of 2,440 tons per year. An average car in the U.S. produces about 6 tons of carbon each year, so Hartford's trees could be said to balance the effects of over 400 cars. The City's trees also help reduce energy consumption within the City by about 1,800 Megawatt hours per year. Since the average Connecticut household uses about 8.4 Megawatt hours per year, this balances the energy impact of over 200 households. This is a saving of about 2,400 barrels of oil not burned in local power plants.

The air quality benefits provided by the trees in Hartford also include substantial reductions in ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter. The survey showed that the trees of Hartford filter out about 37 tons of particulate matter a year. They also remove about 8 tons of carbon monoxide, 7 tons of nitrogen dioxide and 4 tons of sulfur dioxide annually. By shading and cooling our streets, trees also remove or help prevent the formation of about 15 tons of ozone each year.

In improving the quality of the air, trees directly improve the health and physical well-being of those who live and work in Hartford. Particulate matter (PM10) are those small pieces of dust and other irritants that penetrate deep into the lungs and cause respiratory problems, including increasing the effects of asthma and heart disease. Without trees, many of these air pollutants would be breathed in by people in the city. Air pollution reductions are particularly important in Hartford, which has the highest rate of emergency room admissions for asthma in the state.

The overall value of the services provided by trees in cleaning our air is estimated to be on the order of $305,000 each year.




Trees also contribute to the reduction of storm-water runoff, noise abatement and increases in property value – benefits not quantified as a part of this survey.

## The Challenge

The challenge for the City and citizens of Hartford is to take action – to do what is needed to plant, preserve, protect and maintain our trees – including those on both public and private properties. Specifically, we should:

1. Plant a lot more trees, with the goal of achieving a 30-35% canopy cover. Large, tall trees are better for achieving this goal than are smaller trees.
2. Choose where we plant these trees with care and with awareness as to the benefits these trees can provide, including the removal of pollutants, reductions in energy use and the improvement trees make to the quality of life in our city.
3. Devote greater resources to the maintenance of the city's larger and more valuable trees – including the city's very important street tree resource.
4. Undertake further studies of our forest. Hartford should have a full street tree inventory to guide maintenance efforts. A full inventory and a canopy cover analysis will help modernize our approach to urban forest management.
5. Continue the work already under way on developing a strong and consistent Hartford tree ordinance.

All of this can be done. It will require efforts, of the city of Hartford and its citizens, the State Legislature and those state agencies that work with the city.

As is often said about trees – we need to take care of the trees, not just for ourselves but for the benefit of those future generations who will gain from the trees we leave to them.

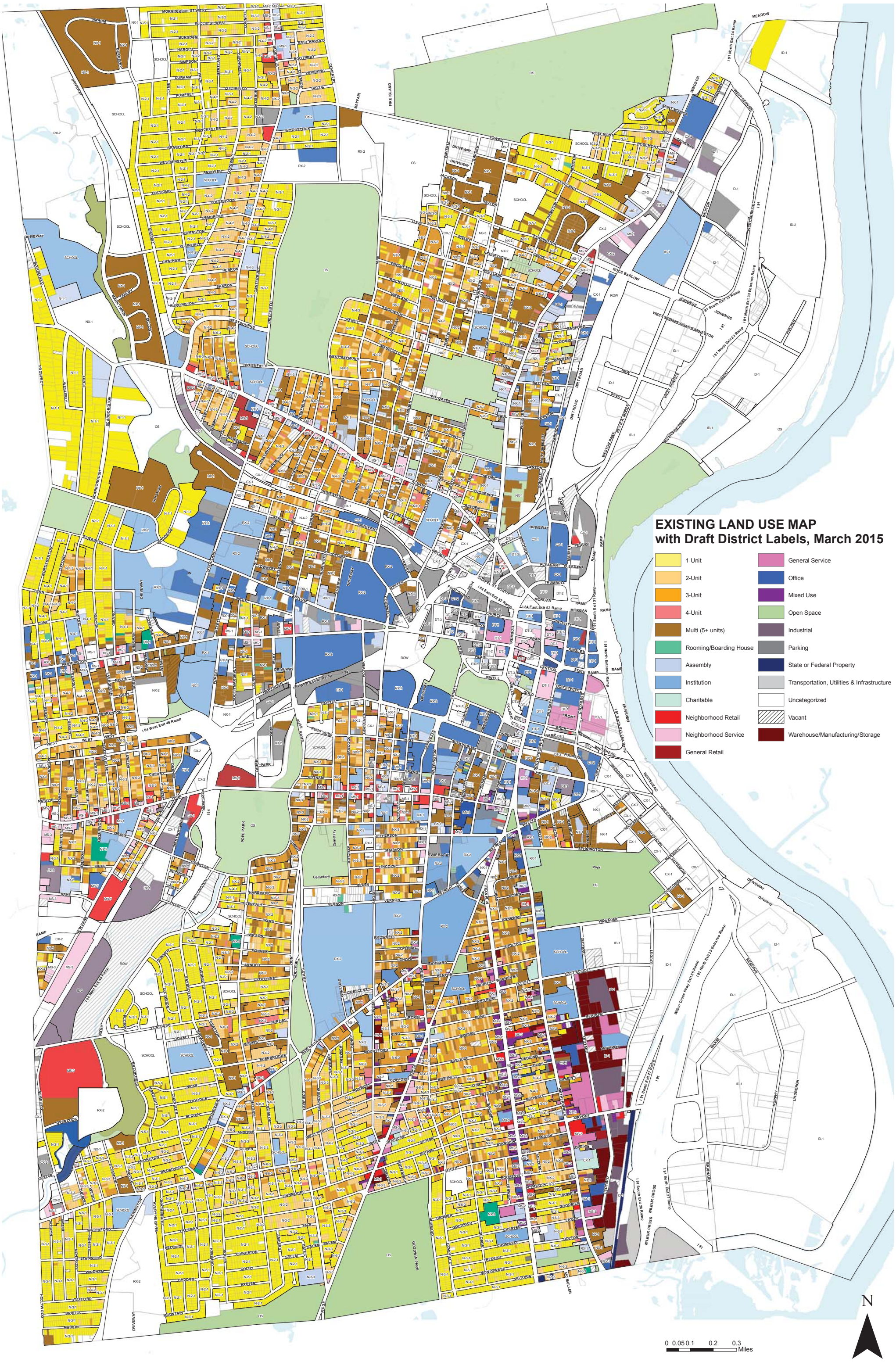
The following organizations are participating in Hartford's Urban Forest Effects (UFORE) analysis:

KNOX PARKS FOUNDATION

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

CITY OF HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

For further information, please contact the Knox Parks Foundation at (860) 951-7694, the Hartford City Forester at (860) 543-8765 or the CT DEP Forestry Urban Forester at (860) 424-3178.


EXISTING LAND USE MAP
with Draft District Labels, March 2015
1-Unit
2-Unit
3-Unit
4-Unit
Multi (5+ units)
Rooming/Boarding House
Assembly
Institution
Charitable
Neighborhood Retail
Neighborhood Service
General Retail
General Service
Office
Mixed Use
Open Space
Industrial
Parking
State or Federal Property
Transportation, Utilities & Infrastructure
Uncategorized
Vacant
Warehouse/Manufacturing/Storage
N
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3
Miles

# Urban Tree Canopy Assessment & Planting Plan

Hartford, Connecticut

Made possible by the generous support of

Bank of America

FOREST SERVICE U S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AMERICAN FORESTS

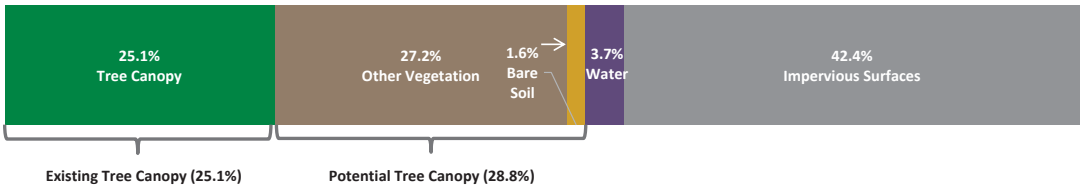
## Executive Summary


This report was developed for the City of Hartford and local non-profit KNOX, by American Forests in partnership with Davey Resource Group, a division of The Davey Tree Expert Company. The primary goals of this assessment and report were to establish baseline data on the extent and function of the existing urban forest, analyze recent changes and trends, and provide tools, data, and other resources to guide future community forest management and reforestation efforts.

An urban tree canopy (UTC) assessment was completed using 2014 aerial imagery of Hartford. The results were compared to a 2010 study that used 2008 imagery. The ecosystem benefits and functions provided by the community's trees were quantified using i-Tree Vue and stormwater modeling equations. A prioritized planting plan was developed based on the UTC assessment and other available community geographic information systems (GIS) data. These assessments were completed to aid in determining a reforestation plan for future tree planting based on goals established by the community.

The UTC assessment found that tree canopy covers 25.1% of the City's 11,577 acres, and impervious surfaces cover 42.4%. There was a small amount of change (0.3% increase) in UTC from 2008 to 2014. If all suitable and realistic plantable locations were covered in tree canopy, Hartford's maximum potential UTC tree canopy cover would reach 53.9%.


**Summary of Hartford's 2014 Urban Tree Canopy and Other Land Cover**



Tree canopy cover provides benefits to the entire community by removing pollutants and carbon from the air and reducing peak stormwater flows. The annual benefits Hartford received from its tree cover in 2014 was estimated to be at least $5,487,213. Tree canopy in Hartford removed an estimated 147,780 pounds of pollutants and 11,264 tons of carbon from the air while slowing more than 590 million gallons of stormwater from entering storm drains during peak storm events. The benefits provided by Hartford's urban forest will increase every year as existing trees mature and new trees are planted.

Nearly 50,000 planting areas were assessed and prioritized; these areas are preferred because planting these locations will maximize ecological and public health and safety services, such as stormwater interception and urban heat island mitigation. These priority planting areas can be assessed individually for their suitability, potential capacity for new trees, and species selection to purposefully maximize the benefits provided by Hartford's tree canopy.

It is not enough to simply plant more trees to increase canopy cover and benefits. Planning and funding for tree care and management, public outreach, and education must complement planting efforts to ensure the success of new plantings and to ensure the benefits desired are being realized through strategic urban forest management and partnerships. To make a difference, the City of Hartford, its residents, and partners can support the urban forestry program by promoting the benefits that trees offer to the community, fulfilling routine maintenance for both public and private trees, and maximizing the space available for new trees.



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## Acknowledgements

Funding for this project has been made possible by American Forests, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, and the U.S. Forest Service.

This report and other urban forestry efforts in Hartford would not be possible without the strong partnership between the City of Hartford and the local non-profit, KNOX. Their continued leadership throughout the community is essential to accomplishing community forestry goals.

American Forests also thanks The Davey Tree Expert Company for the consultation and analysis they contributed to this project.



### *About American Forests*

American Forests restores and protects urban and rural forests. Founded in 1875, it is the oldest national nonprofit conservation organization and has served as a catalyst for many milestones in the conservation movement including the founding of the U.S. Forest Service and the national forest and national park systems. American Forests has conducted thousands of forest ecosystem restoration projects and public education efforts; since 1990 it has planted more than 45 million trees in all 50 states and in 44 countries, resulting in cleaner air and drinking water, restored habitat for wildlife and fish and the removal of millions of tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Learn more at www.americanforests.org.

### *About Bank of America's Corporate Social Responsibility*

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a strategic part of doing business globally. The bank's CSR efforts guide how it operates in a socially, economically, financially and environmentally responsible way around the world, to deliver for shareholders, customers, clients and employees. Its goal is to help create economically vibrant regions and communities through lending, investing and giving. By partnering with stakeholders, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation creates value that empowers individuals and communities to thrive and contributes to the long-term success of its business. The Bank of America Charitable Foundation has several core areas of focus for its CSR, including responsible business practices; environmental sustainability; strengthening local communities with a focus on housing, hunger and jobs; investing in global leadership development; and engaging through arts and culture. As part of these efforts, employee volunteers across the company contribute their time, passion and expertise to address issues in communities where they live and work. Learn more at www.bankofamerica.com/about and follow Bank of America Charitable Foundation on Twitter at @BofA_Community.

### *About the U.S. Forest Service*

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands managed by the Forest Service contribute more than $13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply — a value estimated at $7.2 billion per year. The agency also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests located in or near areas where most Americans live.

## Introduction

American Forests launched Community ReLeaf in spring 2013 as a replicable three-stage program which combines assessments, strategic restoration and capacity-building for outreach and education in targeted cities across the country. Reaching geographically and culturally diverse communities, American Forests aims to bring national attention to the value of our urban forests and plans to be working in 20 major cities by 2020.

Community ReLeaf is currently working in eleven cities: Asbury Park, N.J.; Atlanta; Austin; Chicago; Detroit; Hartford; Miami; Nashville; Oakland; Pasadena, Calif; and Washington, DC.

***Photograph 1. Volunteers planting trees. The City of Hartford has pledged to plant 20,000 trees in 20 years.***

Using the best available scientific measures and methods, the results of the assessments provide insight for urban forestry practitioners, city officials and the general public into the overall condition of each city's urban forest and the environmental and socioeconomic benefits it provides at both the local and national levels — thereby informing strategic preservation and restoration activities.

Complicated by declining budgets, low tree diversity, and substantial economic challenges, Hartford's urban forest has suffered a significant decline across the last half-century. In recent years, the City of Hartford has accomplished an amazing turnaround in its urban forestry efforts. Rising to the challenge, a powerful partnership has been forged between the City of Hartford and the local non-profit KNOX to improve the City's urban forest resources.

Kickstarting renewed enthusiasm, newly elected Mayor Pedro Segarra determined that trees are a community priority following heavy losses during Winter Storm Alfred (2011) and Hurricanes Irene (2011) and Sandy (2012). With support from KNOX, the City of Hartford pledged to plant 20,000 trees in 20 years—a significant investment in the City's urban forest. To help guide these efforts, the community hired its first dedicated city forester in 10 years. In 2010, Hartford completed a UTC assessment using 2008 data, which led to adopting a community goal to increase tree canopy by 10%. Combined, these actions have displayed incredible support and a powerful commitment to the community's trees.

Through these and other efforts, Hartford recognizes that trees are a major component of the City's infrastructure to provide much more than traditional values of aesthetics and shade. From watershed protection to improving property values, trees provide numerous quantifiable environmental, economic, and human health benefits. In particular, trees are key to reducing air pollution and particulate



matter, which results in reduced asthma rates in dense urban environments. Properly placed trees can assist in cooling cities, reduce the urban heat-island effect, and assist in mitigating the impacts of climate change, which also results in fewer respiratory illnesses. Trees have received significant attention for their positive impact on stormwater management. In short, an optimized tree canopy is a significant and valuable asset that addresses multiple community goals and priorities. Regardless of recent successes, Hartford's urban forest continues to face significant challenges. Severe weather in 2011 and 2012 led to substantial tree damage and losses. Increasing development pressure and aggressive utility pruning following storm-related power outages are likely to affect the community's tree cover. Moreover, the larger threats of climate change and invasive pests challenge even the most well-established urban forest.

To receive the environmental benefits a community has come to expect from its green resources, an urban forest must be properly cared for and managed. In recognition of this principle, Hartford is embarking on a process to collect and analyze meaningful data, develop comprehensive strategies, and work together to protect, enhance, and expand Hartford's urban forest.

### Purpose

The intent of this project is to provide Hartford with valuable data that will support efforts to develop community goals, prioritize tree planting and other on-the-ground projects, and establish the importance of the community's tree resources among its other assets. This UTC and planting plan will be especially valuable to develop data-backed strategies and plans for the area's current and future urban forest and green infrastructure.

This assessment establishes tree canopy cover baseline information, identifies and quantifies the current contributions of urban trees, examines canopy gains and losses between 2008 and 2014, and develops a prioritized planting plan based on environmental factors that support community goals.

The information contained within this report is only part of initiatives that are needed to support Hartford's continued investment in its urban forest. The UTC data and maps and other management tools (e.g., tree inventories and management plans) are all necessary components that help guide community reforestation efforts to maximize ecological benefits and urban forest sustainability. As management progresses, Hartford is encouraged to refer back to these results, utilize these data for additional analyses, and continue to seek new tools and information to measure progress, report accomplishments, and inform management decisions.

## *Process and Methods*

This UTC analysis and planting plan was accomplished using a well-established GIS-based process: first, a land cover extraction was completed using the 2014 National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) photography. A series of random plots were generated and manually inspected to ensure accuracy. As an added level of comparison, an i-Tree Canopy assessment, which closely reflected the results of the land cover extraction, was completed. Next, the canopy data from the land cover extraction were analyzed using i-Tree models to generate an estimate of ecosystem benefits provided by the existing tree canopy. Finally, a realistic estimate of potential canopy was created by eliminating unplantable areas such as impervious surfaces or water. These data were used to develop recommendations to achieve Hartford's goals of using trees to mitigate stormwater, reduce the urban heat island, and improve air quality. Finally the data were analyzed to complete a summary report which was delivered to Hartford to assist in the management of their urban tree resources.

This study used a variety of data, tools, and analytical methodologies from various sources, including United States Department of Agriculture aerial imagery, census data, remote sensing technology, locally supplied data, scientific studies, and previous canopy analyses. These sources will be briefly mentioned or referenced throughout the remainder of this report.

## *Urban Tree Canopy Assessment Results*

Based on the most recent aerial imagery, Hartford's current urban tree canopy is 25.1%, which compares favorably with other northeastern cities.

Tree canopy is just one of five land cover classifications generated by this assessment. Additional land cover data, including other vegetation, impervious, bare soils, and water, were created using Hartford's city boundary as the project area. Collectively, this information can be used to gain an understanding of Hartford's tree canopy distribution (Figure 1).

Once an overall canopy analysis is completed, these data can be segmented and examined further to identify trends, including:

- canopy by political boundaries or neighborhoods
- land use
- environmental problems of interest (flooding, excessive heat)
- correlations with the people who reside and work throughout the community (socioeconomics and demographics)

Contained in this report is an analysis of some of the general findings and trends of Hartford's UTC assessment. However, these data can be examined and analyzed in a multitude of different and more specific ways. Hartford is encouraged to further explore these data as new ideas, interests, or priorities arise. Simply, this study represents only a subset of a vast array of information and findings that can be gleaned from the further analyses of the data generated by this assessment.

Table 1. Comparison of Tree Canopy in Several Northeastern Cities

| Community | Tree Canopy (%) |
|---|---|
| Newark, NJ | 15% |
| Pawtucket, RI | 23% |
| Hartford, CT | 25% |
| Bridgeport, CT | 27% |
| Syracuse, NY | 28% |
| Cambridge, MA | 30% |
| New Haven, CT | 38% |

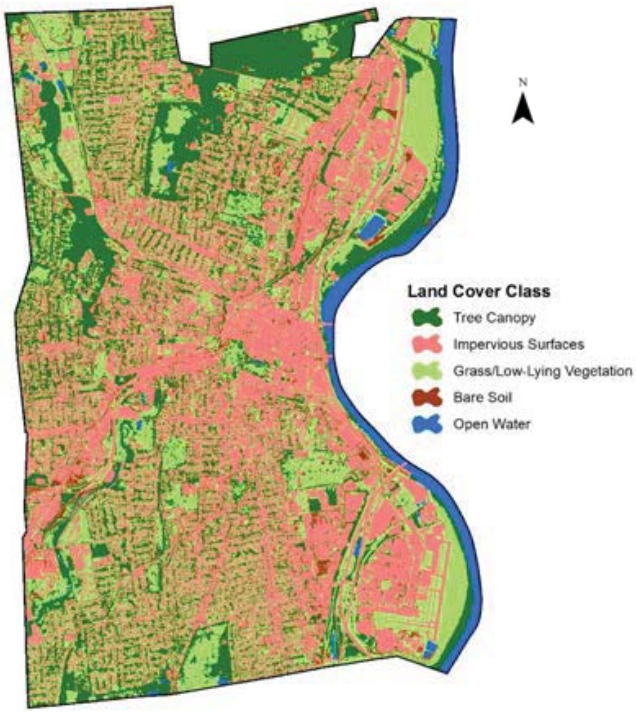


***Figure 1. 2014 land cover in Hartford, Connecticut.***



## *i-Tree Canopy Analysis*

As a comparison, i-Tree Canopy was used to estimate land cover percentage for the project area. Based on the underlying methodology, i-Tree Canopy results are likely to be less accurate than those generated by a complete UTC assessment.

The benefit of the i-Tree Canopy tool is that it allows users to easily interpret Google® Earth aerial imagery for areas of interest and produce statistical estimates of tree cover and other cover types. The tool also calculates levels of uncertainty for the land cover estimates provided. This tool provides a quick and inexpensive means for communities and forest managers to assess their tree canopy cover.

For future, less-rigorous assessments, Hartford can use the i-Tree Canopy tool to complete land cover assessments and compare results using new aerial imagery as it becomes available in Google® Maps. The initial random point locations derived from i-Tree Canopy can be re-imported in future works to produce a statistically valid estimate of land cover over time. Hartford can use the i-Tree Canopy tool to quickly measure land cover changes and progress towards canopy goals between more thorough and complete urban tree canopy assessments.

Table 2. Comparison of i-Tree Canopy and 2014 UTC Assessment Results

| Land Cover Class | Land Cover Classification (%) | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2014 UTC Assessment | i-Tree Canopy |
| Tree Canopy | 25.1% | 24.8% |
| Other Vegetation | 27.2% | 27.0% |
| Bare Soil | 1.6% | 1.8% |
| Water | 3.7% | 3.4% |
| Impervious Surfaces | 42.4% | 43.0% |

***Photograph 2. Screenshot of the i-Tree Canopy tool.***

## Historical Land Cover Change

Results from the study completed by the University of Vermont in 2010, which used 2008 data, were compared to those generated by the 2014 UTC analysis. This comparison yields an historic UTC change assessment between these two studies. Figure 3 illustrates tree canopy changes between 2008 and 2014. Results of the land cover change analysis from 2008 to 2014 are reported in Table 3.

Between 2008 and 2014, the City of Hartford gained 0.3% of tree canopy, increasing from 24.8% to 25.1%. A portion of this modest increase may be attributed to trees that have been added. Since 2012, Hartford and KNOX have planted 1,000 trees a year. A greater portion is likely due to growth and expansion of existing trees. However, the increase in tree canopy would likely be larger if not for significant storm damage in 2011 and 2012, as well as increases in development and the decline of old trees or poor tree species.

Interestingly, the greatest differences between 2008 and 2014 land cover classification are in the other vegetation and impervious surfaces classifications. This result may be due to local trends in development but signifies opportunities for additional planting or canopy expansion.

Table 3. 2008 and 2014 Land Cover Results for Hartford

| Land Cover Classification | Land Cover Classification (%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2014 | Gain / Loss |
| Tree Canopy | 24.8% | 25.1% | +0.3% |
| Other Vegetation | 23.4% | 27.2% | +3.8% |
| Bare Soil | 0.7% | 1.6% | +0.9% |
| Water | 3.5% | 3.7% | +0.2% |
| Impervious Surfaces | 47.6% | 42.4% | −5.2% |

***Figure 2. Sample view of canopy change from 2008 to 2014.***

***Figure 3. Changes in tree canopy between 2008 and 2014.***

## *Neighborhood Tree Canopy*

Urban tree canopy results were further examined by neighborhood boundaries. Neighborhoods are often used to understand tree canopy as they tend to reflect geographies that are well understood by community members and social institutions. Exploring canopy distribution at this level can help facilitate community outreach and education activities as well as develop a deeper understanding of tree canopy at a meaningful community scale.

Current and past canopy coverage by Hartford's 17 neighborhood geographies are identified in Table 4. Figure 4 shows the distribution of neighborhood canopy levels across the city.

Northeast, West End, and South West have the highest levels of tree canopy at 47.3%, 43.0%, and 35.4%, respectively. These neighborhoods are primarily residential in nature or contain significant parks, both of which often contribute to high levels of tree canopy. Of note, these neighborhoods represent a combined 22.8% of the City's land area.

Conversely, the Downtown and South Green neighborhoods have the lowest levels of tree canopy at just near 10.0%. Not surprisingly, these neighborhoods are within the City's urban core where dense development often does not leave much room for trees or other greenery. Combined, these neighborhoods represent 12% of the City's land area.

Between 2008 and 2014, North Meadows and Upper Albany lost the greatest tree canopy, each dropping at least 3%. As reported by the City of Hartford, these neighborhoods correspond with those that contained significant populations of large declining *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple). The removal of these trees likely contributed to canopy loss. That said, most of Hartford's neighborhoods have either remained relatively stable or slightly gained tree canopy since 2008.

Table 4. Neighborhood Tree Canopy Results and Changes from 2008 to 2014

| Neighborhood Tree Canopy | Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2014 | Gain/Loss |
| Asylum Hill | 25.4% | 25.5% | +0.1% |
| Barry Square | 18.5% | 20.0% | +1.5% |
| Behind the Rocks | 25.1% | 26.7% | +1.6% |
| Blue Hills | 30.6% | 29.5% | −1.1% |
| Clay-Arsenal | 21.0% | 20.2% | −0.9%* |
| Downtown | 9.8% | 10.4% | +0.6% |
| Frog Hollow | 19.4% | 20.8% | +1.3%* |
| North Meadows | 20.5% | 17.5% | −3.1%* |
| Northeast | 47.9% | 47.3% | −0.6% |
| Parkville | 15.9% | 14.9% | −1.0% |
| Sheldon-Charter Oak | 12.9% | 13.5% | +0.6% |
| South End | 20.3% | 21.5% | +1.2% |
| South Green | 10.0% | 11.2% | +1.2% |
| South Meadows | 13.3% | 12.6% | −0.7% |
| South West | 34.0% | 35.4% | +1.4% |
| Upper Albany | 23.2% | 20.1% | −3.0%* |
| West End | 43.5% | 43.0% | −0.5% |

**** Canopy gain and loss values appear slightly different than expected due to rounding.***



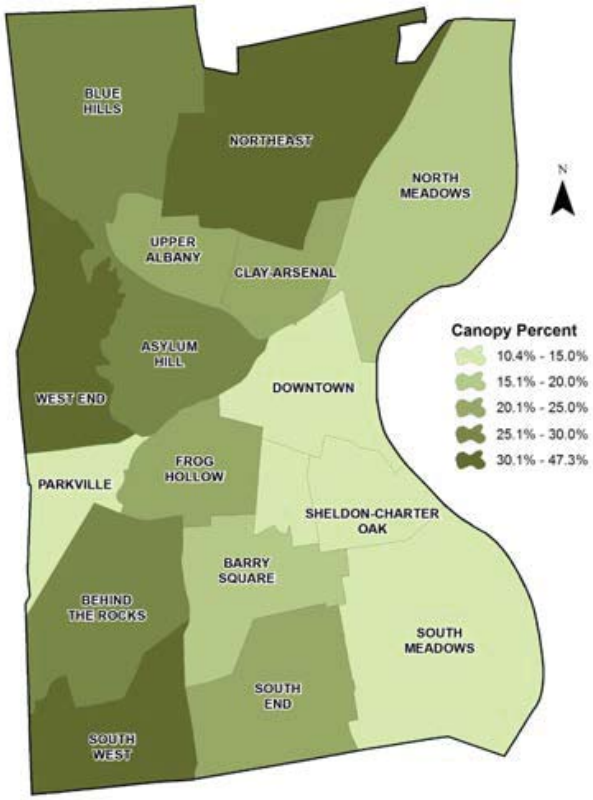


***Figure 4. Tree canopy by Hartford neighborhoods.***

## *Watershed Tree Canopy*

Due to the unquestionable role of trees in mitigating stormwater and improving water quality, watersheds receive significant attention in regards to tree canopy. Changes in tree distribution across watersheds can have substantial impacts on water quality or stormwater challenges during severe storm events. Likewise, understanding opportunities to improve or enhance tree cover in specific watersheds is an important part of a strategy to improve water quality.

Current and past canopy coverages by Hartford's 14 watershed units are identified in Table 5. Figure 5 shows the distribution of tree canopy in watersheds or sub-basins across the city.

Folly Brook (4005-00) and Park River (4400-00) are the largest watersheds by area and have a tree canopy cover of 18.1% and 26.9%, respectively. Together, these watersheds represent 40.7% of the City's land area.

The highest level of tree canopy is within the Connecticut River (4000-25 and 4000-24) watersheds at 83.6% and 51.8%, but these watersheds represent only 2.4% of the City's land area.

Lowest tree canopies levels are in the Connecticut River (4000-28 and 4000-22) watersheds at 2.9% and 8.0% tree canopy cover. However, these watersheds comprise only 0.2% of the City's land area and are the only two watersheds with less than 15% tree canopy.

The Connecticut River (4000-24) watershed had the largest tree canopy gain at 1.6%. On the other hand, the North Branch Park River (4404-11) watershed lost 6.3% tree canopy, while the Connecticut River (4000-00) watershed lost 3.5%. Changes in most other watersheds or sub-basins were slight by comparison.

Table 5. Tree Canopy by Hartford Watersheds

| Watershed Tree Canopy | Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2014 | Gain/Loss |
| Connecticut River (4000-00) | 18.7% | 15.1% | −3.5%* |
| North Branch Park River (4404-00) | 35.5% | 35.2% | −0.3% |
| Connecticut River (4000-22) | 7.0% | 8.0% | +1.1%* |
| Connecticut River (4000-24) | 50.3% | 51.8% | +1.6%* |
| North Branch Park River (4404-12) | 30.3% | 28.6% | −1.7% |
| Park River (4400-00) | 27.7% | 26.9% | −0.8% |
| Connecticut River (4000-25) | 82.2% | 83.6% | +1.4% |
| Connecticut River (4000-26) | 20.0% | 19.7% | −0.3% |
| North Branch Park River (4404-11) | 37.7% | 31.4% | −6.3% |
| Park River (4400-01) | 22.9% | 23.9% | +0.9%* |
| Folly Brook (4005-00) | 17.1% | 18.1% | +1.0% |
| Park River (4400-02) | 31.7% | 32.9% | +1.1%* |
| Piper Brook (4402-00) | 38.4% | 38.2% | −0.2% |
| Connecticut River | 3.0% | 2.9% | −0.2%* |

**** Canopy gain and loss values appear slightly different than expected due to rounding.***



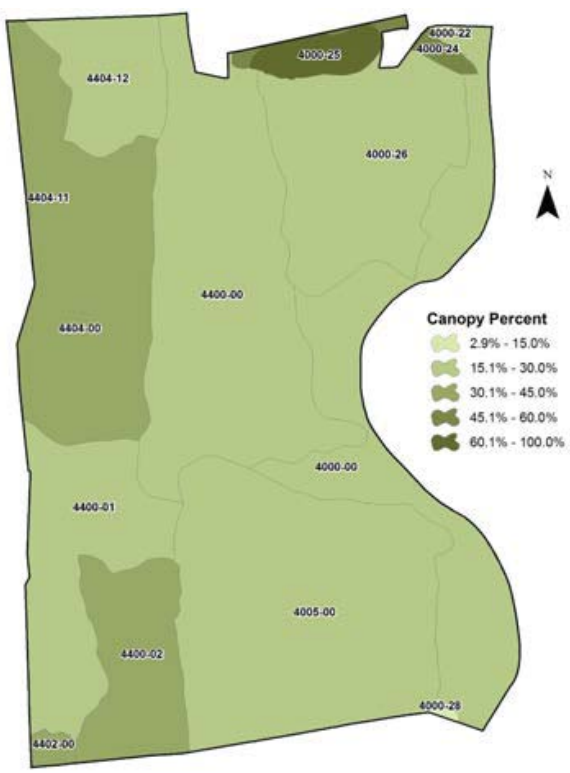


***Figure 5. Tree canopy by Hartford watersheds.***

## *Land Use/Zoning Tree Canopy*

It is well established that tree canopy levels correlate with land use types. Industrial and commercial areas tend to have much lower levels of tree canopy than residential areas of a community. Understanding this relationship across a community can help identify policy concerns or highlight a need for new outreach and education programs that might appeal to or influence specific landowners or property types.

Current and past canopy coverages across Hartford's zoning classifications are identified in Table 6. Figure 6 shows the distribution of canopy levels by zoning classification across the city.

Zoning classifications with the highest percentage of tree canopy are R-8 (57.4%), P (46.1%), and R-7 (37.3%). These classifications are used for public (including cemeteries and parks) and residential properties which tend to have more trees.

Lowest levels of tree canopy are in the B-1, I-1, and B-3 land uses at 5.4%, 8.0%, 9.0%, respectively. These classifications represent more commercial and industrial land uses, which are often located in dense urban cores or contain large buildings or other facilities, leaving little room for trees.

General Business (B-3), Three-Family Residential (R-4) and Residence-Office (RO-3) classifications each lost more than over 1% tree canopy. The remaining zoning classifications remained relatively stable, without significant gains or losses.

Table 6. Zoning District Tree Canopy Results and Changes from 2008 to 2014

| Zoning District Tree Canopy | Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2008 | 2014 | Gain / Loss |
| Downtown Development (B-1) | 6.1% | 5.4% | −0.7% |
| Downtown Perimeter (B-2) | 9.6% | 9.9% | +0.3% |
| General Business (B-3) | 10.7% | 9.0% | −1.6%* |
| Neighborhood Business (B-4) | 13.3% | 13.5% | +0.2% |
| Commercial (C-1) | 13.0% | 13.2% | +0.2% |
| Industrial (I-1) | 8.2% | 8.0% | −0.1%* |
| Industrial (I-2) | 11.1% | 11.3% | +0.2% |
| Public Property and Cemeteries (P) | 46.1% | 46.1% | +0.0% |
| High Density Residential (R-1) | 16.0% | 15.6% | −0.3%* |
| High Density Residential (R-2) | 24.7% | 24.5% | −0.2% |
| Medium Density Residential (R-3) | 23.2% | 23.4% | +0.3%* |
| Three-Family Residential (R-4) | 27.6% | 25.9% | −1.7% |
| One and Two Family Residential (R-5) | 32.4% | 32.7% | +0.2%* |
| One Family Residential (R-6) | 27.0% | 27.0% | +0.0% |
| One Family Residential (R-7) | 37.4% | 37.3% | −0.1% |
| One Family Residential (R-8) | 57.4% | 57.4% | +0.1%* |
| Residence-Office (RO-1) | 17.5% | 17.0% | −0.4%* |
| Residence-Office (RO-2) | 26.6% | 26.5% | −0.1% |
| Residence-Office (RO-3) | 19.7% | 18.6% | −1.2%* |

**** Canopy gain and loss values appear slightly different than expected due to rounding.***



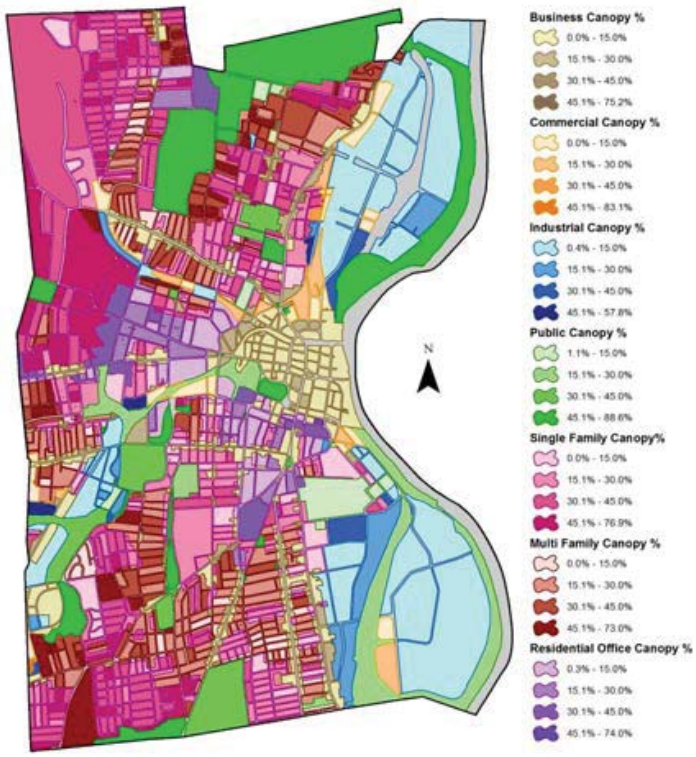


***Figure 6. Hartford's tree canopy by zoning district.***

## *Right-of-Way Tree Canopy*

Rights-of-way (ROW) often represent the few portions of a city's land area that the city government can influence directly. Unlike private property, cities can simply target ROWs with low tree canopy levels for their tree planting program. Understanding the distribution of tree canopy across a community's ROWs can help to prioritize a city's tree planting and preservation activities.

In 2008, Hartford's ROW tree canopy was 16%. Using a 75-foot buffer along public roads, Hartford's ROW tree canopy is estimated to be 17.8% in 2014.

Figure 7 shows Hartford's tree canopy across the street ROWs. This map suggests that tree canopy is significantly lower along major streets and corridors, while residential and neighborhood streets appear to have higher levels of tree canopy.

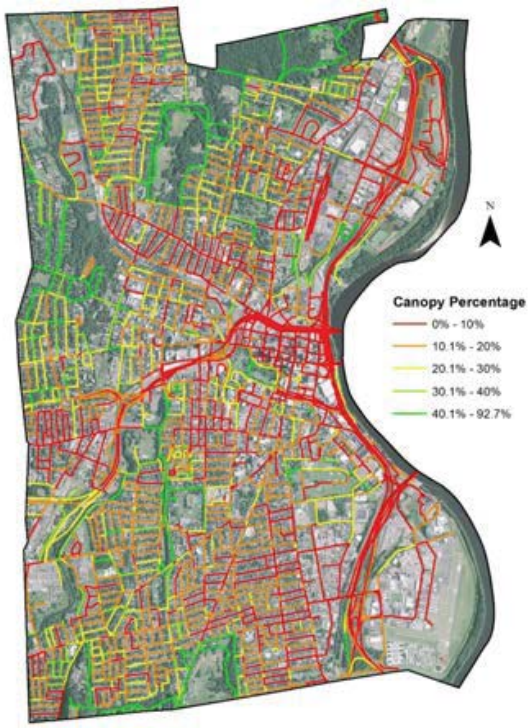


***Figure 7. 2014 Hartford tree canopy by street right-of-way.***



## *Ecosystem Benefits Analysis*

Trees provide a myriad of benefits to Hartford. Trees conserve energy, reduce carbon dioxide levels, improve air quality, and mitigate stormwater runoff. In addition, trees provide numerous economic, psychological, and social benefits.

In total, Hartford's UTC provides approximately $5,487,213 each year in ecosystem benefits. These benefits were quantified using the i-Tree Vue model and TR-55 hydrologic equations. i-Tree Vue estimates carbon storage and sequestration and air pollutant removal. Air pollutants included in estimates are carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$), ozone ($O_3$), particulate matter ($PM_{10}$), and sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$). TR-55 hydrologic equations model stormwater runoff.

Aside from annual benefits, Hartford's urban forest is currently valued at $18,665,630 in contributions to property values and stored carbon.

***Photograph 3. As this tree grows, it will increasingly provide benefits to the community. Trees of all ages and shapes and sizes draw pollutants, sequester carbon from the air, and protect water quality while helping to manage stormwater.***

## Stormwater Interception

Trees intercept rainwater by capturing water droplets on their leaves and bark. A tree's expansive root system also absorbs water from the surrounding soil, increasing the soil's water holding capacity. Combined, these processes result in reducing or slowing the amount of stormwater runoff. Without trees, cities would have to invest in significantly more stormwater infrastructure to handle the additional water flow that would otherwise be captured by trees.

Hartford's trees capture an estimated 591,022,346 gallons of stormwater annually. That's enough water to fill 895 olympic-size swimming pools. This benefit is calculated to provide approximately $4,728,178 in infrastructure value.

## Air Quality Improvements

Not only do trees take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, but they can also capture fine pollutants and particulate matter on the surfaces of their leaves. Combined, these actions can improve a city's air quality. Recent studies have shown a strong correlation between total tree canopy and reduced rates of pulmonary and cardiovascular disease.

Every year, Hartford's urban forest removes 147,780 lbs. of pollutants from the air. These include: 5,400 lbs. of carbon monoxide (CO), 15,260 lbs. of nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$), 109,020 lbs. of ozone ($O_3$), 2,920 lbs. of sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$), and 15,180 lbs. of dusts, soot, and other particulate matter. Combined, this equates to $256,090 in value annually.

## Carbon Reduction

Trees store massive amount of carbon in their woody tissue. Forests—both urban and rural—are an important carbon sink, helping to mitigate climate change. In total, Hartford's urban forest stores 373,709 tons of carbon which equates to $7,474,180 in value.



## Energy Savings

The cooling benefit provided by trees is easily recognized; simply stand in the shade in a hot day. But this cooling effect also means less energy is needed to keep buildings cool during the hot summer months. Each year, Hartford's trees save 3,843,654 kWhs in energy use. This savings translates to $277,665 in value each year.

Table 7. Estimated Ecosystem Benefits Provided by Harford's Tree Canopy in 2014

| Hartford Tree Canopy Ecosystem Benefits | Annual Ecosystem Benefits | |
|---|---|---|
| | Quantity | Value |
| Air: CO removed | 5,400 lbs. | $3,600 |
| Air: $NO_2$ removed | 15,260 lbs. | $6,466 |
| Air: $O_3$ removed | 109,020 lbs. | $198,218 |
| Air: $SO_2$ removed | 2,920 lbs. | $369 |
| Air: particulate matter removed | 15,190 lbs | $47,437 |
| Carbon sequestered | 11,264 tons | $225,280 |
| Stormwater: reduction in runoff | 591,022,346 gallons | $4,728,178 |
| Energy: savings from cooling | 3,843,654 kWhs | $277,665 |
| **Total Annual Benefits** | | **$5,487,213** |
| | | |
| Current stored carbon* | 362, 445 tons | $7,248,900 |
| Property: increase in property values* | - | $11,416,730 |
| **Total** | | **$18,665,630** |

***Current stored carbon and contribution to property value are measures of total contribution, not an annual value.***

## *Prioritized Planting Plan*

While a UTC analysis is helpful to understand existing tree canopy distribution and value, communities are often interested in expanding tree canopy to optimize the suite of ecosystem benefits provided by the urban forest. Therefore, it is common to start by calculating possible planting area based on the total of all land cover that is open ground—such as lawns, golf courses, and sports fields.

Understandably though, it does not make sense to plant trees in all of these "possible planting areas", such as in sports fields. Some locations are clearly better suited to meeting community goals than others. Therefore, this study analyzed additional data to develop a prioritized planting plan that seeks to maximize the ecosystem services provided by trees, such as capturing stormwater and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Based on the UTC data and Hartford's priorities, 20,516 potential planting locations (Table 8) have been identified that are considered High or Very High priority for helping advance Hartford's goals. These locations represent approximately 943 acres or 8.1% of Hartford's land area.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of priority planting areas across the city. Primary areas of High and Very High planting locations appear to be concentrated along the Connecticut River corridor or in commercialized and industrial areas. It is worth noting that several of these planting priority areas align with areas of canopy loss between 2008 and 2014.

It is important to note that these prioritized planting locations are located both on public and private lands. While Hartford owns and can expand tree canopy on a significant portion of the city, fully realizing potential tree canopy coverage will require the cooperation of business owners and private residents.

The following sections of this report explore planting opportunities that target specific environmental benefits, which represents a small subset of ways these UTC data can be examined. Hartford is encouraged to consider additional strategies and utilize the data generated by this assessment for future analyses.

Table 8. Planting Priority Areas that Maximize Hartford's Goals

| Planting Priorities | Planting Opportunities | |
|---|---|---|
| | No. of Locations | Area (acres) |
| Very Low | 4,282 | 265 |
| Low | 12,330 | 706 |
| Moderate | 12,466 | 598 |
| High | 16,692 | 774 |
| Very High | 3,824 | 169 |
| Total Opportunities | 49,594 | 2,512 |



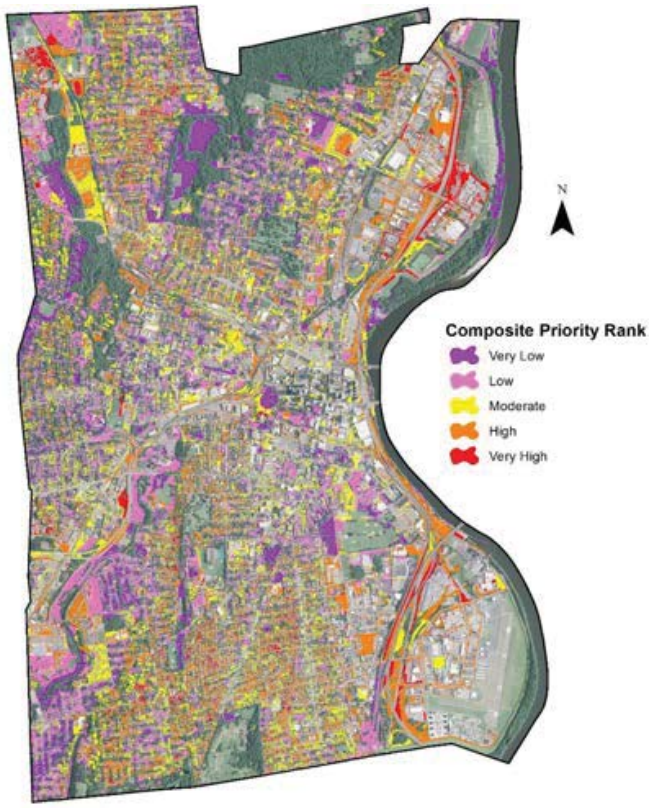


***Figure 8. Planting priority areas that maximize Hartford's goals.***

## *Stormwater Interception*

One of the most valuable benefits provided by the urban forest is its capacity to mitigate and intercept stormwater. Without trees, cities would have to undertake massive expansions of their stormwater systems to handle the increase in stormwate runoff. In fact, many cities are utilizing trees as part of a comprehensive approach to updating their stormwater systems and achieving compliance with local and federal regulations.

To identify and prioritize stormwater runoff risk potential, a number of environmental data were assessed, including proximity to hardscape, soil permeability, location within a floodplain, slope, and a soil erosion factor (K-factor). Overlapping these data produced a runoff priority rating ranging from Very Low to Very High based on a calculated average. Through this prioritization, sites were ranked based on stormwater reduction.

While all available planting sites in Hartford may ultimately be planted over the next several decades, the trees that are planted in the next several years should be planned for areas of greatest need and sites that will provide the most benefits and return on investment.

Based on this analysis, Hartford has an estimated 14,437 planting spaces that should be considered High or Very High priority planting areas to maximize stormwater interception. In total, these locations represent 717 acres or approximately 6.2% of the city's land area.

Figure 9 shows priority planting locations across the city. It appears that many of the High priority areas are located in commercialized or industrial districts or along the Connecticut river corridor. Specifically, the SouthWest, South End, North Meadows, Behind the Rocks, and Blue Hills neighborhoods have significant opportunities for plantings that target stormwater interception.

These planting locations are citywide and may represent both public and private properties. Regardless, these priority locations show a significant opportunity to expand tree canopy and improve Harford's urban forest stormwater interception capacity.

Table 9. Planting Priority Areas that Maximize Stormwater Interception.

| Priority for Stormwater | Planting Opportunities | |
|---|---|---|
| | No. of Locations | Area (acres) |
| Very Low | 10,174 | 438 |
| Low | 12,298 | 749 |
| Moderate | 12,685 | 608 |
| High | 6,125 | 418 |
| Very High | 8,312 | 299 |
| Total Opportunities | 49,594 | 2,512 |



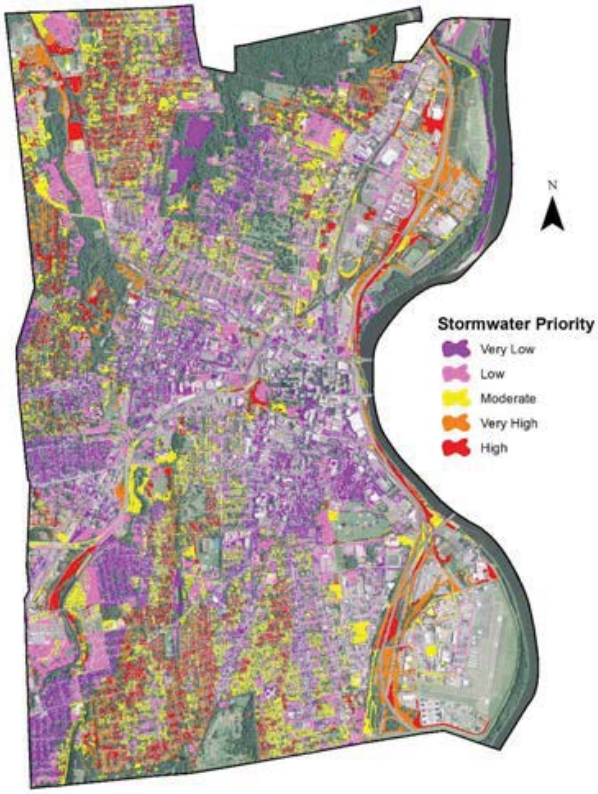


***Figure 9. Planting priority areas that maximize stormwater interception.***

## *Urban Heat Island*

The urban heat island refers to the tendency of cities and other urban cores to be higher in ambient temperature compared to surrounding areas. Generally, this effect is due to modifications in land surfaces, such as greater degrees of pavement or other impervious surfaces that change the reflectivity of the ground surface. While the difference may be only a degree or two, the urban heat island effect can significantly impact air quality, water quality, and even local weather patterns. Expanding tree canopy can help to mitigate the urban heat island by absorbing greater degrees of sunlight and returning natural cover to the land.

Data generated by the UTC analysis were overlaid with available urban heat island information to produce a priority rating that ranged from Very Low to Very High based on a calculated average. Through this prioritization, sites were ranked based on their potential impact to reducing the effects of the urban heat island

The data show that Hartford has an estimated 20,761 planting spaces of High or Very High priority to positively impact the urban heat island effect (Table 10). Combined, these spaces represent 1,069 acres or 9.2% of Hartford's land area.

Figure 10 shows the distributon of planting sites across the city. Priority planting locations are relatively evenly distributed across Hartford. However, small pockets of High-priority areas appear to be clustered along major travel corridors and business areas, as well as along the Connecticut River corridor.

Urban heat island is created by the reflectivity of pavement and other developments. Therefore, the heat island is likely to be greatest in areas of dense development, which tends to be commercial centers of a city. Due to a lack of "open" land, significant tree planting may require exploring various technologies or infrastructure that can help support tree growth, such as structural soils, suspended sidewalk, or de-paving.

Table 10. Planting Priority Areas that Maximize Impacts to the Urban Heat Island

| Priority for Heat Island | Planting Opportunities | |
|---|---|---|
| | No. of Locations | Area (acres) |
| Very Low | 10,115 | 417 |
| Low | 2,621 | 418 |
| Moderate | 16,097 | 609 |
| High | 3,904 | 521 |
| Very High | 16,857 | 548 |
| Total Opportunities | 49,594 | 2,513 |



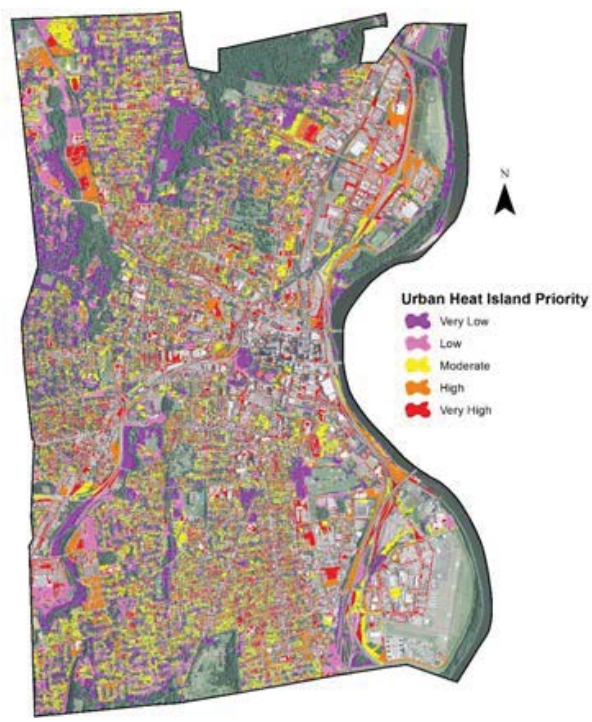


***Figure 10. Planting priority areas that maximize impacts to the urban heat island.***

## Planting Recommendations

While the prioritized planting plan is a great guideline for finding planting locations based on community goals, it does not take into account specific site factors, neighborhood preferences, or on-the-ground realities. Prior to planting, Hartford will need to assess these planting locations for factors that may limit a location's suitability for trees.

All plantings should follow the "right tree in the right place" mantra. Before selecting a tree for planting, make sure it is the right tree—know how tall and wide it will be at maturity. It is equally wise to consider factors such as road salt, soil conditions, or existing hardscape that might limit the suitability of a tree for a specific location.

***Photograph 4. Trees should be selected to improve species diversity, and plant the right tree in the right place. Here, KNOX is getting ready to add new trees within Hartford.***

As exhibited by recent losses of Norway maple, too much of a single tree species can lead to significant canopy losses. Therefore, Hartford is encouraged to improve tree diversity. Low species diversity (large number of trees of the same species) can lead to severe losses in the event of species-specific epidemics, such as the devastating results of Dutch elm disease (*Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*), emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), and Asian longhorned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*). The composition of a tree population should follow the 10-20-30 Rule for species diversity: a single species should represent no more than 10% of the population, a single genera no more than 20%, and a single family no more than 30%.

A list of suggested tree species is provided in Table 11. These tree species are specifically selected to help meet Hartford's goals of intercepting stormwater, mitigating the heat island, and improving air quality. This list is not exhaustive, but can be used as a guideline to enhance Hartford's planting palette to meet community objectives.



Table 11. A Selection of Tree Species Suitable for Hartford that Contribute to Intercepting Stormwater, Mitigating Heat Island Effects, and Improving Air Quality

| Tree Species* and Mature Size | | | Ecosystem Benefit Contribution | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scientific Name | Common Name | Size | Stormwater | Heat Island | Air Quality |
| *Acer rubrum* | red maple | large | yes | | |
| *Acer × freemanii* | Freeman maple | large | yes | | |
| *Aesculus × carnea* | red horsechestnut | medium | | | yes |
| *Aesculus flava* | yellow buckeye | large | yes | | yes |
| *Betula nigra* | river birch | medium | yes | | yes |
| *Carpinus betulus* | European hornbeam | large | yes | | yes |
| *Celtis occidentalis* | common hackberry | large | yes | | yes |
| *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* | Katsuratree | large | yes | | |
| *Corylus colurna* | Turkish hazelnut | large | yes | | |
| *Liriodendron tulipifera* | tuliptree | large | yes | | yes |
| *Magnolia acuminata* | cucumber tree magnolia | large | yes | | yes |
| *Magnolia macrophylla* | bigleaf magnolia | large | yes | | |
| *Magnolia tripetala* | umbrella magnolia | small | yes | | |
| *Ostrya virginiana* | eastern hophornbeam | medium | yes | | yes |
| *Phellodendron amurense* | Amur corktree | medium | yes | | |
| *Platanus × acerifolia* | London planetree | large | yes | | |
| *Platanus occidentalis* | American sycamore | large | yes | yes | |
| *Quercus alba* | white oak | large | | yes | |
| *Quercus macrocarpa* | bur oak | large | | yes | |
| *Quercus shumardii* | Shumard oak | large | yes | | |
| *Tilia americana* | American linden | large | yes | | yes |
| *Tilia cordata* | littleleaf linden | large | yes | | |
| *Tilia tomentosa* | silver linden | large | yes | | yes |
| *Zelkova serrata* | Japanese zelkova | large | yes | | yes |

***This species list is not inclusive of all trees recommended and/or suitable for Hartford's climate. While all trees will contribute ecosystem benefits to some degree, these species were simply identified by i-Tree researchers as being in the top 10% of species for each ecosystem benefit identified.***

## Conclusion

Hartford's urban forest is an important community asset that provides numerous environmental benefits. With the appropriate care, Hartford's urban forest is expected to increase in value over time. Recent actions, including a commitment to plant 20,000 trees in 20 years, exhibit Hartford's deep commitment to growing its tree canopy by 10%. With a strong partnership between the City and KNOX, Hartford is embarking on significant efforts to protect and expand its urban forest.

Since 2008, Hartford's urban tree canopy has increased by 0.3%. Assuming this rate of increase continues, it would take Hartford almost 200 years to increase its tree canopy by 10%. Unfortunately, in the face of climate change, severe weather events, and invasive pests, urban forests are facing more threats than ever before. To achieve the goal of a 10% increase in urban tree canopy, it is not enough to simply plant trees. Instead, Hartford will need to develop a multifaceted approach to expanding tree cover that includes emphasis on tree planting and also maintenance, tree preservation, and community outreach and education to develop wide public support for Hartford's efforts.

This analysis was designed to help document Hartford's urban forest, quantify the value and benefits that it provides, and develop recommendations for future planting efforts. This study should be considered as a starting point—a place from which to begin conversations and the exploration of opportunities that seek to enhance the City's tree canopy. Based on this analysis, some key recommendations emerge:

- In the face of noticeable losses of aging Norway maple, it is apparent that Hartford needs to increase tree species diversity. Hartford is encouraged to adhere to the 10-20-30 planting rule and expand its planting palette to include new tree species.
- Many opportunities for impacting Hartford's priorities of intercepting stormwater and mitigating the urban heat island are within core commercial and industrial areas. To meaningfully expand canopy, Hartford should explore opportunities to improve infrastructure that support trees and engage property and business owners in community forestry efforts.
- Planting is only part of the equation to expand tree canopy. Preserving or protecting old established trees can often have a greater impact on urban canopy levels while the newly planted trees are growing. Hartford should examine policies to identify any barriers or potential incentives to protecting and expanding tree canopy communitywide.
- The prioritized planting plan in this report provides a great starting point for urban greening efforts that will have immediate impacts on managing stormwater and reducing the urban heat island. Hartford should use these data to strategically plant trees in a way that provides the greatest community benefits.
- This report represents one way in which these data can be analyzed. With additional datasets or new questions, these data can further be used to help Hartford manage its urban forest. Therefore, Hartford is encouraged to continue to use these data to analyze additional relationships and connections that can help develop community objectives, understand challenges, and frame management decisions.



## Glossary

**bare soil land cover**: Areas mapped as bare soil typically include vacant lots, construction areas, and baseball fields.

**canopy**: Branches and foliage which make up a tree's crown.

**canopy cover**: As seen from above, it is the area of land surface that is covered by tree canopy.

**canopy spread**: A data field that estimates the width of a tree's canopy in five-foot increments.

**existing UTC**: The amount of UTC present within the city boundary.

**family:** A level in the classification hierarchy above genus; indicated by the suffix *aceae*.

**genera**: A taxonomic category ranking below a family and above a species and generally consisting of a group of species exhibiting similar characteristics. In taxonomic nomenclature, the genus name is used, either alone or followed by a Latin adjective or epithet, to form the name of a species.

**geographic information systems (GIS)**: A technology that is used to view and analyze data from a geographic perspective. The technology is a piece of an organization's overall information system framework. GIS links location to information (such as people to addresses, buildings to parcels, or streets within a network) and layers that information to give you a better understanding of how it all interrelates.

**greenspace:** A land use planning and conservation term used to describe protected areas of undeveloped landscapes.

**impervious land cover**: Area that does not allow rainfall to infiltrate the soil and typically includes buildings, parking lots, and roads.

**i-Tree Canopy:** The i-Tree Canopy tool allows users to easily photo-interpret Google aerial images of their area to produce statistical estimates of tree and other cover types along with calculations of the uncertainty of their estimates. A simple, quick, and inexpensive means for cities and forest managers to accurately estimate their tree and other cover types.

**i-Tree Tools**: State-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the USDA Forest Service that provides urban forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools. The i-Tree Tools help communities of all sizes to strengthen their urban forest management and advocacy efforts by quantifying the structure of community trees and the environmental services that trees provide.

**i-Tree Vue**: The i-Tree Vue tool makes use of freely available National Land Cover Data (NLCD) maps to assess land cover, including tree canopy, and some of the ecosystem services, carbon storage and sequestration, and air quality provided by the current urban forest. The effects of planting scenarios on future benefits can also be modeled using Vue.

**land cover**: Physical features on the earth mapped from satellite or aerial imagery such as bare soils, canopy, impervious, pervious, or water.

**nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$)**: Nitrogen dioxide is a compound typically created during the combustion processes and is a major contributor to smog formation and acid deposition.

**open water land cover**: The land cover areas mapped as water typically include lakes, oceans, rivers, and streams.

**other vegetation**: Pervious cover or a vegetated area (grass, shrubs, etc.) that allows rainfall to infiltrate the soil; typically includes parks, golf courses, and residential areas.

**ozone ($O_3$)**: A strong-smelling, pale blue, reactive toxic chemical gas with molecules of three oxygen atoms. It is a product of the photochemical process involving the Sun's energy. Ozone exists in the upper layer of the atmosphere as well as at the Earth's surface. Ozone at the Earth's surface can cause numerous adverse human health effects. It is a major component of smog.

**particulate matter ($PM_{10}$):** A major class of air pollutants consisting of tiny solid or liquid particles of soot, dust, smoke, fumes, and mists.

**pervious land cover**: A vegetative area that allows rainfall to infiltrate the soil and typically includes parks, golf courses, and residential areas.

**possible UTC—impervious**: The amount of land within the city boundary covered by impervious surface that is theoretically available for the establishment of tree canopy. This excludes all buildings and all pavement within the public right-of-way (ROW).

**possible UTC**: The amount of land that is theoretically available for the establishment of tree canopy within the city boundary. It is the combination of Possible UTC - Vegetation and Possible UTC - Impervious.

**possible UTC—vegetation**: The amount of land within the city boundary covered by non-tree vegetation that is theoretically available for the establishment of tree canopy.

**riparian**: Of or relating to or located on the banks of a river or stream.

**right-of-way (ROW)**: A strip of land generally owned by a public entity over which facilities, such as highways, railroads, or power lines, are built.

**street tree**: A street tree is defined as a tree within the right-of-way.

**species:** Fundamental category of taxonomic classification, ranking below a genus or subgenus and consisting of related organisms capable of interbreeding.

**sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$)**: A strong-smelling, colorless gas that is formed by the combustion of fossil fuels. Sulfur oxides contribute to the problem of acid rain.

**tree**: A tree is defined as a perennial woody plant that may grow more than 20 feet tall. Characteristically, it has one main stem, although many species may grow as multi-stemmed forms.



**tree benefit:** An economic, environmental, or social improvement that benefited the community and resulted mainly from the presence of a tree. The benefit received has real or intrinsic value associated with it.

**urban forest:** All of the trees within a municipality or a community. This can include the trees along streets or rights-of-way, parks and greenspaces, and forests.

**urban tree canopy assessment (UTC)**: A study performed of land cover classes to gain an understanding of the tree canopy coverage, particularly as it relates to the amount of tree canopy that currently exists and the amount of tree canopy that could exist. Typically performed using aerial photographs, GIS data, or Lidar.

**vegetative swale**: Constructed open-channel drainageways used to convey stormwater runoff. Vegetated swales are often used as an alternative to, or an enhancement of, traditional storm sewer pipes.

## Reference


i-Tree Canopy. i-Tree Software Suite v6.1. (n.d.). http://www.itreetools.org.

i-Tree Hydro. i-Tree Software Suite v5.0 (beta) (n.d.). http://www.itreetools.org.

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O'Neill-Dunne, J. 2010. A Report on the City of Hartford's Existing and Possible Tree Canopy. University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory. Burlington, Vermont. March 16, 2010.

# PUBLIC COMMENT ON CAA DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION FOR OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL

By: Sara C. Bronin

***via email at cgoegel@ctairports.org***
***with four attachments***

February 7, 2017

Thank you to the Connecticut Airport Authority for opening up the Draft Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for public feedback. I am writing to express strong opposition to this proposal, as well as the incomplete environmental assessment that was composed without the procedural engagement or factual support required by law.

By way of brief introduction, I am a resident of the city of Hartford and a professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law, and I serve as the faculty director for the Center for Energy and Environmental Law. I am also the Programs Chair of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, the Chair of the City of Hartford's Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Co-Chair of the City's Climate Stewardship Council. My views do not necessarily represent the views of these organizations. However, you will find in the record testimony from the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, the Vice Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission, and numerous organizations and representatives affiliated with the Climate Stewardship Council – all opposing this project.

I am going to break my comments into a discussion of the procedural and substantive defects.

## I. Procedural Defects

First, I believe it is important to note numerous inadequacies in the process of the drafting this environmental assessment.

### *A. Public Not Engaged As Required by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*

According to 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6 and other parts of the NEPA, a federal agency must "make diligent efforts to involve the public in preparing and implementing their NEPA procedures," and "to provide public notice of NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of environmental documents so as to inform those persons and agencies who may be interested or affected." The process involved to date does not appear to satisfy this standard. As just one example, Mayor Bronin stated at the informal meeting on January 12, 2017 that to his knowledge no one from the project team had attempted to meaningfully engage his office – particularly troubling given that nearly all of the project (including parcels in Wethersfield) impacts land owned by the City of Hartford.

Similarly, the record presented in the draft environmental assessment reflects no attempts to contact relevant City staff members or citizen commissions. As the Chair of the City's Planning & Zoning Commission, I was never contacted either directly by the agency or by any of its numerous hired consultants. The Tree Commission, which has very publicly declared its interest in the subject of trees in the city of Hartford, was never contacted. Neither were a host of environmental advocates with a deep interest in these topics.

As far as the record shows, the agency never contacted the Capitol Region Council of Governments – a federally-recognized agency and important player in planning decisions as mandated by state law, which formulates region-wide approaches to land use and environmental planning.

Finally, I learned from the Nature Conservancy – which actually holds easements to which this project would be subject – just found out the details the proposal a few days before the January 12, 2017 public hearing. This delay in contacting the easement holder is especially troubling when it is clear from the record presented in the environmental assessment that the project has been underway for a period of several years.

*B. Lack of Clarity in Information Provided to the Public*

The draft environmental assessment lacks information clear enough for the public to be able to provide informed testimony.

- There is no statement about the number of trees – even ballpark estimates – which would be affected by this proposal. Citizens repeatedly asked the consultant team to identify the number of trees affected at the January 12, 2017 meeting. Without having even a rough estimate of the scope of the project, there is no way to assess or properly testify as to the project's possible effects. The draft environmental assessment must incorporate a statement about scope, with the public process commenced anew.

- There is no overall map showing the proposed project area. The piecemeal maps that are provided do not indicate what parts of the project area fall within the cities of Hartford, East Hartford, Wethersfield and/or Glastonbury. Citizens cannot be expected to testify about this proposal when they cannot even determine whether the affected area would be located within their town.

- In addition, the record does not contain copies of the maps which were attached to form letters that the agency sent to public officials in June 2015. Without these maps, the public has no basis to opine on the evolution of the plan, or any prior alternatives considered by the agency.

*C. Inappropriate Public Meeting Location & Procedures*

So far, there has been only one public meeting scheduled for discussion of the draft environmental assessment, which took place on January 12, 2017.

As the entire (or nearly entire) impact area of the site is located in Hartford, it is inappropriate that no meeting was scheduled in the City of Hartford. More specifically, the location of that public meeting – Wethersfield Town Hall, located on a busy highway – is difficult to access from Hartford by means other than private car, which depressed turnout by Hartford residents and others who rely on public transportation. Coupled with the lack of public notice provided (see above), there seems to be a clear effort to hinder public engagement in this process.

Moreover, this meeting was called "informal" by the consultants, and proper procedures were not followed to document the comments provided at the hearing, which were almost entirely negative. Significantly, the meeting was not recorded. One of the consultants sitting in the front jotted a note or two down, but that effort is not enough given the large number of members of the public who showed up to speak. In addition, no consultant asked any of the speakers for their names or contact information. Finally, the forms offered to attendees to fill out had the *wrong airport name and location on them.*

### *D. Section 106 Consultation Process is Inadequate*

Above, I have described the failure to demonstrate diligent efforts in engaging the public, which is statutorily required. In addition to this broad failure, there is also the very specific failure to engage the City of Hartford pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The environmental assessment acknowledges that the Section 106 process is triggered by the undertakings of the agency. This process triggers consultation requirements with certain mandated parties. One of those types of parties is the certified local government. As several recent federal circuit cases have recognized, the sending of a form letter is not adequate to constitute consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In this situation, the form letter sent to then-Mayor Segarra in June 2015 (which was included in the public record) does not appear to even mention historic properties that may or may not be affected by the proposal. In fact, the record shows no attempt to connect with the City of Hartford on the basis of its status as a certified local government under the National Historic Preservation Act. This deficiency in process must be addressed to ensure that archaeological sites or historic resources in the project area, or affected by the proposed project, are adequately protected.

## II. Substantive Defects

Now, I turn to the inadequacies relevant to the substance of these findings.

### *A. EA Fails to Consider Cumulative Effect of Actions*

In this instance, and in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act, the agency failed to consider the cumulative effects of its proposed actions.

The draft environmental assessment fails to consider three major reports on Hartford's trees that are widely available – including those conducted with the support of another federal agency (the U.S. Forest Service):

- U.S. Forest Service, State Department of Environmental Protection Division of Forestry, City of Hartford, & Knox Parks Foundation, "Hartford's Urban Forest – the Challenge" (2008)
- U.S. Forest Service & University of Vermont, "A Report on the City of Hartford, Connecticut's Existing and Possible Tree Canopy" (2010)
- U.S. Forest Service & American Forests, "Urban Tree Canopy Assessment & Planting Plan" (2014)

These are attached to this message and must be considered by the agency and its consultants for the environmental assessment to adequately account for the effects of the project action. Each of them speaks to the economic, public health, and environmental benefits of our fragile tree canopy system.

Moreover, and relatedly, the analysis of mitigation measures in the report is wholly inadequate. The consultant's statement at the January 12, 2017 meeting that mitigation measures need only be considered at a later stage was highly misleading.

*B. EA Is Based on Incorrect Information*

The draft environmental assessment is full of incorrect information.

- As one example, the zoning analysis contained in the environmental assessment says that the affected property is zoned industrial. But as the zoning map appended to this testimony shows, this area is actually in the Connecticut River Overlay. According to 5.4.1.A of the regulations, the Connecticut River Overlay zone "is intended to improve access and enjoyment of the Connecticut River through carefully planned, use-specific development that is sensitive to the ecology of an urban waterway." Please incorporate as an appendix to this testimony Hartford's zoning regulations and zoning map, available at www.hartford.gov/planning/zoning
- As another example, the document says that no residents live within 1.5 miles of the proposed project. Yet residents living on Wethersfield Avenue (see the attached existing uses map) live only a half mile away from the project area. There are many residents – primarily low- and low-moderate income – who live well within 1.5 miles of the proposed project.

*C. EA Does Not Consider Impact to the Immediate Neighborhood*

The environmental assessment does not consider the effects of removing trees on the areas immediately adjacent to the project site. Trees provide erosion control, wildlife habitat, and other ecosystem benefits. Hartford's South Meadows contains very few trees. There is no analysis of the broader lack of trees in the immediate vicinity, or of the significant impact that the removal of these mature trees will have on the immediate neighborhood.

In addition, as several testified at the public meeting on January 12, 2017, the need to consider odor control – not mentioned once in the draft environmental assessment – is a paramount concern to many immediate neighbors, both in Hartford and in Wethersfield. Currently, the large number of trees located in the area of the proposed project filter odors coming from the sewage treatment facility and trash-to-energy plant that are located nearby. Without these trees to filter smells, nearby neighborhoods will suffer from reduced quality of life and possibly even reduced property values. No mention was made of odors in the draft environmental assessment.

*D. Environmental Justice Wrongly Seen as Not Affected*

One of the most egregious statements in the entire draft environmental assessment occurs in section 5.14.2, which among other things states that "there are no impacts to low income or minority populations." Assuming the residents of Hartford – a federally recognized environmental justice community – breathe, hear, and go outside, they will be affected by this proposal. Trees provide odor control, filter noise, and reduce air pollution, and the removal of thousands of trees would certainly affect public health and quality of life in Hartford.

*E. Section 4(f) Review is Inadequate*

According to the draft environmental assessment, the inclusion of the Folly Brook Natural Area in the project zone triggers Section 4(f) review. However, I was unable to discern from the report how the agency had undertaken its Section 4(f) review, and how (and whether) the mitigation measures and alternatives were properly evaluated.

*F. Comprehensive Plan of Development & Zoning Tree Provisions Not Mentioned*

The City's Comprehensive Plan of Development, "One City, One Plan" (2010), is not mentioned once in the report. As the attached excerpt of Chapter 9 demonstrates, the city's guiding planning document emphasizes the need to protect the tree canopy. This emphasis is rendered perhaps even more meaningful by the fact that over 1,000 stakeholders participated in the process that led to the adoption of "One City, One Plan."

Relatedly, the draft environmental assessment does not even mention Chapter 6 of the zoning code, which implements the tree-related vision in "One City, One Plan" by protecting trees during construction, increasing the number of trees required on individual zoning lots, and refining the tree species and types that are allowed, among other things. Reflecting a strong policy in favor of trees and landscapes, that Chapter starts with this statement of intent (in section 6.1.1):

> The landscape standards outlined in this section are designed to meet the following set of goals.
> A. To provide for healthy, long-lived street trees within all public ways to improve the appearance of streets and create a buffer between pedestrian and vehicular travel lanes.
> B. To increase the compatibility of adjacent uses and minimize the adverse impacts created by adjoining or neighboring uses.

C. To promote the prudent use of water and energy resources by achieving and maintaining sustainable, functional landscapes.
D. To shade large expanses of pavement and reduce the urban heat island effect.
E. To mitigate the impacts of climate change through prudent management of natural resources and wildlife habitat.

Mention should be made of the comprehensive plan in the draft environmental assessment, with analysis provided as to how this action advances the city's comprehensive planning goals.

*G. Tree Ordinance Not Mentioned*

The City of Hartford's robust Tree Ordinance is not mentioned once in the draft environmental assessment. The Tree Ordinance expresses the value placed on a strong and healthy tree canopy by the citizens of Hartford. Moreover, the Tree Ordinance provides a rigorous system of review by and coordination with the City Forester, requirements for public and private properties, and penalties for noncompliance. (Again, the City Forester was not contacted by the agency.) Failure to even mention this important municipal law, and the policy and intent behind it, is a significant defect in the draft environmental assessment.

## III. Conclusion

Given the limited amount of time available for public comment about this draft environmental assessment, these comments address only a few topics at a very high level. Still, I hope that I have highlighted some of the flaws in this draft environmental assessment. I urge you to abandon this proposal. If you continue to pursue it, a significant amount of work has to be done to comply with the federally-required process of consultation and evaluation.

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:31 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Opposition to tree removal near Hartford-Brainard Airport

Dear Mr. Goegel,

I am writing in opposition to the tree removal near Hartford-Brainard Airport by the FAA and CAA. Many of these healthy trees are on Nature Conservancy lands and in the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area. The CAA's environmental impact evaluation does not sufficiently examine many environmental impacts of the tree removal. These impacts include:

- Habitat loss - The trees along the river are important habitat for migratory birds and bald eagle breeding.
- Erosion, runoff, and sedimentation - Trees along shorelines are well-known to help prevent erosion, runoff, and sedimentation.
- Water quality - Trees along rivers filter sediment and pollutants, keeping the Connecticut River clean.
- Flood control - Shoreline trees slow floodwaters, protecting downstream properties.

The CAA has not sufficiently notified the public about this proposed tree removal, especially municipal departments and local residents.

Thank you for your time and your forthcoming action.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kleindienst
Middletown, CT

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:21 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** CONNECTICUT RIVER

Colin,

My name is Roberto Rodriques. My wife Jacqueline and I live along the Connecticut River at the mouth in Old Lyme since 1982. We've seen much change over the years.

Trees along the river bank are critical for wild life of all kinds aquatic and avian. There is a natural loss of trees by the river itself as it takes different coarse changes from year to year.

The bald eagle, osprey and northern herrier poulations have just started to make a come-back over these past four years or so. Purposely removing trees will hamper these population especially along this gift of the Connecticut River.

Please help us in this cause.

Kind regards,

Roberto & Jacqueline Rodriques

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**From:** Elaine Shapiro
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 3:17 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Brainard Airport Tree Removal Proposal

Dear Mr. Goegel,

I am concerned about the proposal to remove trees on property near Brainard Airport. I care deeply about taking care of our undeveloped lands, open spaces, wildlife habitat, and trees. I understand that you have concerns about pilots' visibility due to trees. However, there are many unanswered questions such as how many trees, what impact this tree removal will have on endangered species such as the bald eagle, and how this project will affect the environmental health of the wetland area in question. Furthermore, I feel residents should have been informed, and there should be much more time for public education and comment. Surely, working with residents and environmental groups, it is possible to discover some alternative practices to tree removal which will ensure safety and protect the environment. For example, does the flight path need to include this area?

Thank you for your time and attention.

Elaine Shapiro

**From:** Kevin Sullivan
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 11:21 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Airport Tree Removal: please work with Knox to replace what is lost

Hello Mr. Goegel,

If it is necessary to remove trees, I hope there is a plan to plant trees to balance the loss. Perhaps the Authority could work with Knox Parks to determine the best location for the replacement trees outside of the flight path.

I can understand there could be a need to remove some trees, or even all of them, for airport safety. It also seems reasonable to me that replacing the trees in the surrounding area is the right thing to do.

I am a homeowner in northern Wethersfield, work in Hartford, bicycle to work year round and bicycle to errands in the Hartford region. Consequently, I am very familiar with the local area.

I respect the needs and safety of airport users, and ask that there be equal respect for the community and the environment.

Thank you for your consideration!

Kevin Sullivan

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Judith |
| Last Name: | Keane |
| Question or comment? | Please keep me informed about any future plans for tree cutting and any expansion plans. I am opposed to either actions. The planes that go over my house are frequent, loud and low. I am not pleased with the enforcement of planes using the river for approach....it never happens! |

# Stop Destructive Airport Tree-Cutting Plan In Hartford, Groton

Looking from Bluff Point State Park across the Poquonnock River in Groton toward the Groton-New London Airport. (MICHAEL McANDREWS / Hartford Courant)

By **SARA BRONIN, ANDREW MINIKOWSKI**

MARCH 21, 2017, 6:00 AM

The Connecticut Airport Authority should withdraw its plans to cut down trees along the Connecticut River in Hartford and at Bluff Point State Park in Groton, and release new plans that protect aviators while safeguarding natural resources.

The airport authority has issued preliminary plans to remove a large number of healthy trees at and near several airports around the state. Although these proposals are intended to increase aviation safety, there is no meaningful analysis that shows that the trees pose existing threats or that the proposed level of tree removal is necessary. The state's conservation-minded citizens need to speak out and ensure that the airport authority reformulates its proposals in an environmentally responsible manner.

Two of the proposals stand out for the sheer level of environmental destruction they entail. The proposal for Hartford's Brainard Airport would remove at least 40 acres of trees, many of which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River. The area has served as a nesting site for bald eagles in recent years and many of the trees are

located on protected lands including the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area and property held under Nature Conservancy conservation easements.

In urban areas like Hartford, trees are especially worthy of preservation: Studies show that the presence of trees in urban centers can lower crime rates and contribute to positive mental health benefits. Hartford's trees should be afforded the utmost protection, not felled without compelling reason. A more carefully constructed plan could easily preserve trees without sacrificing safety.

The proposal for the Groton-New London Airport would remove a vast number of trees in one of the crown jewels of Connecticut's state park and forest system: Bluff Point State Park and Coastal Reserve. Protected in perpetuity by the state legislature in 1975, 800-acre Bluff Point is Connecticut's only coastal reserve, and the largest undeveloped parcel of land on the Connecticut shoreline. As a result, it serves as crucial habitat for countless species, especially imperiled shorebirds such as the piping plover and roseate tern as well as numerous migratory songbirds. The airport authority's proposal, however, would subject the heart of Bluff Point to the unnecessary removal of mature, healthy trees and the damage imposed by transporting heavy machinery through pristine woodlands and beaches. This is not the future of Bluff Point that the legislature and people of Connecticut envisioned when they decided to permanently safeguard this unique property.

Connecticut residents have the good fortune to live in a state with extensive parks and forests for recreation, relaxation and communion with the natural world. Despite being the fourth most densely populated state in the nation, approximately 60 percent of Connecticut's land area is covered with forest. Trees play a crucial role in the cultural and aesthetic life of our state, from the august history of the Charter Oak, and its scion still standing in Bushnell Park, to the autumnal splendor of the Litchfield Hills.

Connecticut's trees are a precious resource. We must ensure that Bluff Point and the Connecticut River are not subjected to reckless plans that would inflict long-standing harm on crucial ecosystems. The airport authority is holding public hearings in Hartford on April 18, Glastonbury on April 19, and Wethersfield on April 27, an opportunity for residents to defend trees along the Connecticut River and at Bluff Point.

Connecticut law says there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state. These resources belong to you, and must be managed and preserved for the enjoyment of all current and future citizens. The airport authority should develop new plans that maintain airport safety while making the effort to acknowledge and protect the astounding natural resources of the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound coastline.

*Sara Bronin of Hartford is a trustee of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment and chairwoman of the city's planning and zoning commission. Andrew Minikowski is legal fellow at the Connecticut Fund for the Environment based in New Haven.*

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Connecticut Airport Authority.– I read in today's *Hartford Courant* that you plan to cut 40 acres of trees near Brainerd airport. I want to register my strong opposition to that plan. Those trees are a valuable environmental resource for many reasons which you are probably aware of. The claim of airplane safety seems a little overblown to me. I have lived here for more than 30 years and can think of no crashes caused by any trees. You can't reduce risk to zero. This plan fails any cost-benefit test and I urge you to reconsider.

John Harmon

# Wethersfield CommUnity

## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
30 MAR 2017 PM 3 L

I would like to register my strong opposition to your proposal for the clearing at Brainard Airport. The wholesale cutting of trees is unwarranted for as many of the 22 acres in Wethersfield are NOT obstructions. I oppose the CAA plan.

Cynthia Greenblatt
06109

MR. COLIN GOEGEL
CAA
334 Ella Grasso Tnpke.
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

# Wethersfield
# CommUnity
## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
29 MAR 2017 PM 5 L

I understand the need to ensure pilot safety. I also value our environment and the preservation of trees near Brainard Airport. Please work to conserve our riverside properties.

Debra Cohen
Wethersfield 06109

Mr. Colin Goegel
CAA
334 Ella Grasso Trpke
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

# Wethersfield
# CommUnity
## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
30 MAR 2017 PM 8 L

Dear Mr Colin,
I am worried about the Tree issue at Brainard airport. I understand the need to make sure our runways are safe but I feel like the excessive cutting of our trees will have a negative impact on our enviorment and wild life. Please Reconsider.
Farah Evenson 06109

Colin Goegel
CAA,
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

# Wethersfield CommUnity For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
30 MAR 2017

Dear Mr. Goegel
I have no objection
to plane safetey but
I am completely against
Clear cutting of trees
at Brainard airport.
It's excessive.

Jessica Martin 06109

Colin Goegel
CAA
33A Ella Grasso Tpke
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

# Wethersfield CommUnity For The Resistance

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Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

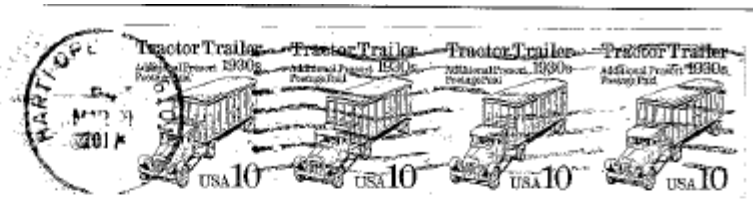
HARTFORD CT 061
30 MAR 2017 PM 3 L

Dear Mr. Goegel,
I am writing to oppose the massive amount and excessive tree cutting planned at Brainard Airport. I have no opposition to plane safety, but the plan is excessive.
Thanks,
Suzanne Bertin 06109

Colin Goegel
CAA
334 Ella Grasso Tpke
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

# Wethersfield
# CommUnity
## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT




Dear Mr. Goegel,
I am writing you to stand in opposition to the Brainard Airport tree removal. These trees are an important and vital part of Wethersfield and do not serve any purpose in decimating them. The proposed future airpo

Colin Goegel
CAA
334 Ella Grasso Tpke.
suite 100
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

Wethersfield

CommUnity

For The Resistance

Dear Mr. Goegel,

I am writing to oppose the plan to cut trees at Brainard Airport, beyond what is essential safety maintenance for current flight levels. Trees create the air that we breathe and are a distinctive part of our New England landscape!

Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre 06109

# Wethersfield CommUnity

## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
01 APR 2017 PM 3 L

Mr. Goegel,

~~Da~~ I would like to bring to your attention that I do NOT want the trees surrounding the Brainard Airport decimated. The plan is excessive and unnecessary. Thank you!

Kelly DeLa Cruz

[redacted]

CAA
334 Ella Grasso Tpk
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
ATTN: Colin Goegel

| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Mike |
| Last Name: | Papa |
| Question or comment? | As an agro ecological land care professional working for 11 years in the development of ecological systems , I need to state that most the time doday people tend to jump into conclusions to just benefit the button line of how much money are there tone made ! I call this RAT RACE . Speaking for the interest of future generations I URGE to work the ecosystem in a way to benefit everyone not just BUSINESS BUSINESS AND BUSINESS at all cost !! There is to much that it is IGNORED today !! All that it matters is money 💰 and more money 💰 little it is taken into consideration to protect every one life and well being on this spinning planet ⍰! I am AGAINST the removal of trees and the DESTRUCTION OF ECOSYSTEMS! I am for a balanced society were BUSINESS will be RESPONSIBLE!!! This it is not happening today ! Unless you change your erroneous practices , people will SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES of polluted air , water and mud slide !! Plus chronic dtsease will be at all time high !! Capitalism without 💝 Will be considered like COMMUNISM. ! I urge you to REFRAIN FROM THE REMOVAL OF TREES ⍰ |

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**From:** G. Simmons
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 7:57 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>; tkochamp417@yahoo.com
**Subject:** Tree cutting

Stop destroying the planet. People who support the destruction of the animals and environment are menaces to the earth and everything that is necessary to sustain life and everything good.
Stop the war on the animals and environment.
Sincerely, Glynis Simmons

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From: Jan Dudek
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 6:16 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Trees

Please save our trees along the CT river. They provide stabilization for the riverbank, nesting sites for birds and beauty.

Thank you,
Jan and Mike Dudek

**From:** John Hall
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 4:32 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Please don't cut down more trees at airports

To: Connecticut Airport Authority

I am saddened and distressed by the fact that public policy decisions almost always, it seems, put the natural environment last – trees, birds, fish, etc. – compared to proposed marginal improvements in human convenience, safety, and economics. When trees, birds, and other creatures of the wild pose minor challenges, our first impulse always seems to be to kill it, cut it down, drive it away, or take away its source of sustenance. As a result, our world is become sterile, paved, "developed," and increasing lacking in wild birds, mammals, fish, and the creatures that we say we love.

Now I hear that 2 small airports want to cut down large numbers of trees near runways, but for what real purpose? 40 acres of trees near Brainard Airport need to come down, really? When are we humans going to finally say "no" to this excessive expansion of our footprint? Are those trees worthless in your eyes? Are vegetation and wild spaces along the Connecticut River of no account? And what about the erosion that would come with such cutting?

I have often walked at Bluff Point State Park, and I have visited the park in my kayak from the water. It's a beautiful little corner of preserved, wild coastline, and it's an ecologically sensitive area. Occasionally small planes fly in and out of that airport. Are those planes and some imagined improvement in human safety more important than the birds that live and find shelter in those trees?

Please don't do it. We human beings need to say "no" sometimes, or the few remaining natural habitats we have will also disappear. Other creatures have a right to live on this planet, and I want to live on a planet that includes those creatures.

Thank you for your consideration of my strong feelings on this matter.

John C. Hall

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From: Wayne Paul
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 7:45 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Trees

Why do these trees at Brainard have to come down?
Lee Paull

**From:** Lisa Leah Haut
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 5:57 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** please act to save oiur precious trees!

Dear Mr. Colin Goegel,

I was shocked and dismayed to hear of the Airport Authority's plans to destroy many trees at and near several airports around the state! Trees are of crucial importance to residents for a multitude of reasons. Not only do they provide essential habitat for much of our wildlife, including eagles, but they provide physical and mental health benefits for all residents.
Two of the proposals stand out for the sheer level of environmental destruction they entail. The proposal for Hartford's Brainard Airport would remove at least 40 acres of trees, many of which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River. The area has served as a nesting site for bald eagles in recent years and many of the trees are located on protected lands including the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area and property held under Nature Conservancy conservation easements.

The proposal for the Groton-New London Airport would remove a vast number of trees in one of the crown jewels of Connecticut's state park and forest system: Bluff Point State Park and Coastal Reserve. Protected in perpetuity by the state legislature in 1975, 800-acre Bluff Point is Connecticut's only coastal reserve, and the largest undeveloped parcel of land on the Connecticut shoreline. As a result, it serves as crucial habitat for countless species, especially imperiled shorebirds such as the piping plover and roseate tern as well as numerous migratory songbirds. The airport authority's proposal, however, would subject the heart of Bluff Point to the unnecessary removal of mature, healthy trees and the damage imposed by transporting heavy machinery through pristine woodlands and beaches. This is not the future of Bluff Point that the legislature and people of Connecticut envisioned when they decided to permanently safeguard this unique property!

There is no compelling need to wreak this destruction in our state! These are reckless plans that will have longstanding negative consequences for Connecticut. ecosystems of which we humans are a part.

Please withdraw this plan to cut down trees along the Connecticut River in Hartford and at Bluff Point State Park in Groton, and please release a more carefully constructed plan that would preserve trees without sacrificing safety.

Sincerely,

L. Leah Haut,

(a concerned citizen of CT that values the natural resources and wildlife legacy that belongs to each and every one of us)

From: Maryann Gianantoni
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 6:00 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Tree cutting at Brainard Airport

Trees that need to be cut down can be replaced elsewhere. Safety first for airports and the flying public!

Thank you.

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**From:** rick haeseler
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 3:47 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Tree cutting at Brainard Airport

Dear Sir,

I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed extensive tree cutting proposed around Brainard Airport. I understand that airplane safety may require limited tree trimming and removal, but the proposed plan greatly exceeds the amount needed for safety. This environment is sensitive riverside forest and should be respected. There are nesting eagles in the immediate area and care should be taken to do the least possible damage. I once ask that you implement a much more limited plan and reject the current proposal.

Cordially,

Eric Haeseler

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**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 5:26 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Protect our trees

Dear Colin Goegel, project manager:

Please save our trees along the Connecticut river near Brainard Airport.

Trees protect the Connecticut river bank, provide habitat to our national bird, the bald eagle, and provide the necessary oxygen for the clean air we must breath for ourselves and future generations.

Thank you for your humane consideration in this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Alison Barr Zyla

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**From:** Schweizer, Scott
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 4:53 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Save our Trees on the CT River

Dear Colin Goegel,

I am writing to urge you do everything possible to safeguard trees and the eagle habitat along the CT River. I am a concerned citizen in CT and along with others I care deeply about our natural environment. I believe the current tree cutting project proposals are far too excessive and will lead to irreparable damage along the CT River.

Please listen to concerned citizens, preservationists and other concerned stakeholders who have spoken out against the current destructive tree cutting plans and in favor of scaling back these projects to the absolute minimum in order to safeguard CT natural habitat.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Sincerely,

Scott Schweizer

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**From:** Elizabeth Y Craig
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 11:08 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Tree Cutting at Brainyard Airport

Dear Mr Goegel,

I urge you to withdraw your plans to cut down 40 acres of trees along the CT River in Hartford and at Bluff Point in Groton.

Have you walked this land you plan to clear cut? Did you see the bald eagles there this winter?
It is quite a sight to see the eagles circling above the River.
If you think there are plenty of other woods for them to nest in-you are mistaken.

Help us- keep CT healthy and beautiful! Please protect all the healthy trees on your site-trees can make such a big differance to our quality of life here in CT and are especially important along the river bank.
Trees provide 'free' services including-improving air and water quality, abating noise, stabilizing riverbanks, regulating temperatures, reducing flooding and drought, aiding aquifer recharge and keeping the water cool enough to avoid summer fish kills, etc,etc.
Please reconsider your excessive tree removal plan.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Craig

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**From:** Amy Merli
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 3:42 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Brainard Tree Cutting

Hello!

As a resident in Hartford I deeply saddened by the potential large amount of trees we would loose. Trees are essential for many reasons, more than we even know, please consider that these trees are habitats for animals and clean our air. We are a small state and clear cutting this many trees is devastating to everyone that lives here.

Amy Merli

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**From:** Linda Quinet
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 3:08 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Save trees on the CT river

Please save trees along the Connecticut river near Brainard Airport. They protect the Connecticut River banks and provide habitat for bald eagles!

Linda Quinet
Willimantic, CT

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**From:** Carrie K.
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 1:35 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** CT River Trees

Dear Mr. Goegle,

I'm writing to express my concern and opposition to cutting down any trees along the CT River. Those trees provide a home for a variety of wildlife, including some threatened and endangered species. The trees also help clean the air and provide shade that prevents evaporation since CT is still under it's average yearly rainfall. Their beauty, especially in the fall, is a benefit as well. The Hartford Courant reported that those trees are in protected areas, so it seems to me they should be left alone. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Carrie Kistner, Windsor Locks

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From: Diane Hoffman
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 12:38 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: opposition to the Connecticut Airport Authority plan to remove healthy trees

4/18/17

Dear Mr. Goegel;

I am writing to express my opposition to the Connecticut Airport Authority preliminary plan to remove a large number of healthy trees at and near several airports around the state. I understand that the purpose of the planned removal is to improve aviation safety but I further understand that objective studies have not been performed to document that a meaningful threat by trees exists or that the proposed degree of removal is needed.

According to Sara Bronin, trustee of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment and chairwoman of the Hartford's planning and zoning commission and Andrew Minikowski, legal fellow at the Connecticut Fund for the Environment based in New Haven "Two of the proposals stand out for the sheer level of environmental destruction they entail. The proposal for Hartford's Brainard Airport would remove at least 40 acres of trees, many of which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River. The area has served as a nesting site for bald eagles in recent years and many of the trees are located on protected lands including the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area and property held under Nature Conservancy conservation easements."
They go on to point out that "In urban areas like Hartford, trees are especially worthy of preservation: Studies show that the presence of trees in urban centers can lower crime rates and contribute to positive mental health benefits. Hartford's trees should be afforded the utmost protection, not felled without compelling reason. "

I agree with these experts that "A more carefully constructed plan could easily preserve trees without sacrificing safety." Our trees are a precious natural resource and should be carefully managed and maintained.

Parks such as Bluff Point State Park and Coastal Reserve should not be sacrificed! They point out that this park is "Protected in perpetuity by the state legislature in 1975, 800-acre Bluff Point is Connecticut's only coastal reserve, and the largest undeveloped parcel of land on the Connecticut shoreline. As a result, it serves as crucial habitat for countless species, especially imperiled shorebirds such as the piping plover and roseate tern as well as numerous migratory songbirds. The airport authority's proposal, however, would subject the heart of Bluff Point to the unnecessary removal of mature, healthy trees and the damage imposed by transporting heavy machinery through pristine woodlands and beaches. This is not the future of Bluff Point that the legislature and people of Connecticut envisioned when they decided to permanently safeguard this unique property."

Our trees are what make Connecticut a special place to live and are essential to our physical and emotional health. Trees are a basic part of our ecosystem and we upset that system at our own peril.

As the article goes on to say “Despite being the fourth most densely populated state in the nation, approximately 60 percent of Connecticut's land area is covered with forest. Trees play a crucial role in the cultural and aesthetic life of our state, from the august history of the Charter Oak, and its scion still standing in Bushnell Park, to the autumnal splendor of the Litchfield Hills.
Connecticut's trees are a precious resource. We must ensure that Bluff Point and the Connecticut River are not subjected to reckless plans that would inflict long-standing harm on crucial ecosystems.”

Our Connecticut law recognizes and codifies that there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state. I agree that “The airport authority should develop new plans that maintain airport safety while making the effort to acknowledge and protect the astounding natural resources of the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound coastline.”

Please respect and honor the critical role of trees in our environment and do not sacrifice them to expediency and shortsighted goals.

Sincerely,
Diane Hoffman

---

From: NICK
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 7:29 AM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: save trees along the Connecticut river near Brainard Airport.

Hello

Please save trees along the Connecticut river near Brainard Airport.

Thank you
Nick Lavorato

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Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 3:37 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Tree cutting along the CT River

Dear Mr. Goegel,

I live in Madison, and we have had issues with EverSource's overly aggressively cutting trees in our town. Strong opposition at the local and state level helped reduce the amount of unnecessary tree removal. As a resident of Connecticut, I am concerned about protecting our eagle populations, and so I ask you to limit the cutting of trees that provide habitat and protection for the bald eagles Connecticut is lucky to have. Thanks for helping to take care of our wonderful natural resources.

Sincerely,
Susan Donoghue

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April 18, 2017

Attn: CT Airport Authority – Project Manager Colin Goegel
Re: Tree Clearing Hearings

I regret that I am unable to attend the hearings due to prior commitments. Therefore, I am submitting this letter requesting it be included in the record to be read and placed in consideration regarding the Tree Clearing and Cutting proposal.

The well being of our surroundings and human health stand at a serious tipping point. At a time of increasing devastating floods, concerns over water and air quality, and depletion of key landscapes, It is ever more crucial for policy makers and those entrusted with important oversight to recognize that trees matter and are of vital importance in sustaining our natural resources, waterways, and maintaining an ecological balance.

According to recent scientific studies and accumulated data TREES: :

- Limit run-off of storm water into rivers
- Absorb and mitigate air pollution ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and volatile organic compounds that are harmful for humans to breathe.
- Are the only infrastructure elements that increase in value over time
- Provide shade which keep buildings cool, reducing cooling costs in the summer
- Block wind, helping to reduce heating costs in the winter
- Protect wildlife habitats and a diversity of vegetation

For these many reasons, I stand in support with the many organizations that have expressed their objections to the Tree Clearing and Cutting proposal in Hartford and Groton and also with the many citizens who join them in requesting that the Airport Authority reconsider this project. Instead I ask that you use your expertise to seek a better environmentally sound solution that does not impact our shorelines, natural habitats, wildlife, landscape, and Connecticut's aesthetic appeal.

We appreciate the Airport's need to address flight safety measures, but respectfully submit that one consideration should not be at the risk of destroying an existing consideration in the form of trees which protect our shorelines, habitats, air and water quality, and well being of CT citizens. My position is not an emotional outcry but one of long standing study and observation of the fallout from lack of environmental stewardship that ultimately costs us all.

Although I serve on various Commissions and Boards, I am submitting this as an individual concerned for Connecticut's future. Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Beaudin
Windsor CT

Sources referenced: (these are a few of the numerous sources and studies which substantiate the importance of trees) Ohio State University College of Food, Agriculture and Sciences, Scientific American, Trees Forever

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
***April 18th - April 19th - April, 27th*** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) Alden Pane

Date: 4/18/17

Comment(s):

based on Hartford's 2015 Tree Study:

- trees in Hartford remove 117,780 lbs of pollutants from air
  11,264 tons of carbon
- Very high asthma rate in city
- Urban Canopy is shrinking or stable despite stated goals to increase. > over 10 yrs
- Let's use experts (environmental) to plan proper mitigation around airport (native species, grasses, shrubs, lower, slow growing trees
- Mitigation in Hartford - How do we ensure that trees are planted where they are needed MOST
  KNOX is a private organization - how can citizens insure trees are planted equitably
- I would like to see a Hartford City liason to the project to ensure adequate environmental / social justice implementation.

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://grotonairport.caa-analysis.com

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
***April 18th - April 19th - April, 27th*** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Date: _____

Comment(s): _____

Your example of tree thinning looks pretty aggressive

How can you ensure that over zealous cutting won't occur?

How about addressing the runways?

Trees do regrow

Once a species is extinct, it does NOT come back.

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

From: Beth Noble
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 12:25 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: CT TREES

Please, Please Save CT's Trees!

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 12:41 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** protect trees along the CT river

Please consider a reasonable buffer (at least 250 feet) from the shore of the Connecticut River against tree cutting. It is environmentally unsound and has a negative impact to Connecticut's autumn tourism.

Sincerely,

Francesca Heap

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Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 5:17 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Tree cutting near Brainard Airport

Mr. Goegel – I am concerned about the removal of trees along the water by the airport. Water's edge is an important and fragile environment. Protected in perpetuity by the state legislature in 1975, 800-acre Bluff Point is Connecticut's only coastal reserve, and the largest undeveloped parcel of land on the Connecticut shoreline. As a result, it serves as crucial habitat for countless species, especially imperiled shorebirds such as the piping plover and roseate tern as well as numerous migratory songbirds. The airport authority's proposal, however, would subject the heart of Bluff Point to the unnecessary removal of mature, healthy trees and the damage imposed by transporting heavy machinery through pristine woodlands and beaches. This is not the future of Bluff Point that the legislature and people of Connecticut envisioned when they decided to permanently safeguard this unique property. Please look for alternative solutions. This proposal is just too high a price to pay. Thank you for your attention. - Jane Pittari (06751)

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From: Becky Coley
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2017 5:45 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Trees

Please do not remove trees supporting wildlife habitat. These trees are necessary for a healthy environment.
Becky Coley

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**From:** Elaine Dove
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 19, 2017 10:07 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** tree removal near airports

Dear Mr. Goegel:

I am VERY concerned about your plans to remove large numbers of trees near various airports in our state. I cannot believe that this is a good plan. We need trees. Trees provide so much for a clean and healthy environment and removing them, especially large numbers of them as proposed, is an environmental slaughter. I am going to write my legislators and hope that you will not follow through on your plan. Please reconsider this project and table tree removal until there is DEEP approval and legislative consensus. Thank you. Elaine Dove, Hamden, CT.

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*Facts and the truth are not partisan. They are the bedrock of our democracy. And you are either with them, with us, with our Constitution, our history, and the future of our nation, or you are against it. -Dan Rather, January 22, 2017*

Elaine M. Dove

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**From:** Jody Podell Damsky
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 19, 2017 7:38 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** OPPOSE Airport Tree Removal

As a Connecticut citizen, I DO NOT SUPPORT the removal of trees around CT airports.

Connecticut residents have the good fortune to live in a state with extensive parks and forests for recreation, relaxation and communion with the natural world. Despite being the fourth most densely populated state in the nation, approximately 60 percent of Connecticut's land area is covered with forest. Trees play a crucial role in the cultural and aesthetic life of our state, from the august history of the Charter Oak, and its scion still standing in Bushnell Park, to the autumnal splendor of the Litchfield Hills.

In urban areas like Hartford, trees are especially worthy of preservation: Studies show that the presence of trees in urban centers can lower crime rates and contribute to positive mental health benefits. Hartford's trees should be afforded the utmost protection, not felled without compelling reason. A more carefully constructed plan could easily preserve trees without sacrificing safety.

Jody Damsky
Hamden, CT

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# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
***April 18th - April 19th - April, 27th*** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) NOREEN P. CULLEN

Date: 4-19-2017

Comment(s): We should not remove a single extra acre near Brainard Airport. We have already intruded far enough into the habitat that is contiguous to the airport.

"Safety" for whom? The only crashes have been on East Hartford Main Street — they had nothing to do with trees.

No further destruction of habitat or the buffer area — trees! — is needed.

This is just wrong!

Crashes are due to human error — not trees.

Perhaps the right answer is to shut down portions of the airport & runways.

Planting trees in a separate area does not restore habitat.

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

# Wethersfield
# CommUnity
## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
15 APR 2017 PM 7 L

FOREVER USA

The safety of pilots is important but preserving the environment and not cutting trees in Wethersfield is also important. Im asking you to reconsider the cutting of trees in Wethersfield Cove. The cove trees provide a sound barrier, wildlife preservation and environmental security.
DO NOT CUT THE TREES
Sincerely. Colleen Mattatall

Colin Goegel
CAA
334 Elm Grosso Tnpk
Suite 160
Windsor Locks CT
06096

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
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Perhaps the right answer is to shut down portions of the airport & runways.

Planting trees in a separate area does not restore habitat.

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

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**From:** Ann Diamond
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 8:50 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Save Trees at Brainard Airport

Please do not remove the trees at Brainard airport. They are not "disposable" and are needed to protect our environment and wildlife in CT. Thank you, Ann Diamond, 596 Prospect St. New Haven, CT

Thomas Jefferson, letter to the Danbury Baptists (1802)

*"To argue with a man who has renounced the use of reason is like administering medicine to the dead."*

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**From:** Fay Kandarian
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 8:53 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Destruction of trees around airports

Dear Project Manager Gogegel,
I urge you to do everything possible to preserve all the healthy trees that are targeted for destruction around our state's airports.
They are a valuable public resource and serve critical roles in preserving the environment, air quality, and quality of life. Trees removed now will not be replaced within our lifetimes. Please help protect our natural legacy.

Sincerely,

Fay Kandarian

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From: patricia pendl
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2017 7:46 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Saving trees!

I am appalled by the recent destruction of trees throughout the great state of Connecticut. Everywhere we go my daughter and I notice another beautiful tree coming down. Please find another way to keep our air travelers safe - certainly destroying acres of trees is not the only plan available!

Patricia-ann Pendl

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**From:** McCarthy, Shirley
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 9:40 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Airport plans

I am very opposed to the CT Airport Authority's plans to remove trees. Trees have innumerable benefits to humans and wildlife. From direct health benefits for humans as well as critical habitat to all kinds of wildlife, water run off prevention, CO2 mitigation, etc..., we cannot afford to lose trees.

Please do the right thing and cancel these plans.

Sincerely, Shirley McCarthy, MD, PhD

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**From:** Peggy Carpenter
**Sent:** Friday, April 21, 2017 5:05 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Tree cutting

I urge that the airport tree cutting projected be given more scrutiny and thought. This will grossly affect erosion and removal of valuable trees that are important to wildlife
Please vote no
Peggy carpentrer

---

**Sent:** Sunday, April 23, 2017 4:15 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Brainard Airport Trees

We vote 'no' re the Brainard Field razing of trees. It is not only unnecessary, haphazard, but a travesty to eliminate full-growth trees. Please consider their worth.

Nanette & Brian Morelli

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**From:** Chris Fazzina
**Sent:** Monday, April 24, 2017 10:28 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Tree Cutting in Wethersfield

Hello-
I am writing to strenuously object to the tree cutting proposed at Brainard Airport. I am most concerned about the tree cutting in Wethersfield's Folly Brook Natural area. I have not heard any argument that has moved me to believe that this project is in the best interests of our town. I believe the harm that would come from removing these trees is too detrimental to the beauty of our town and is reason enough to stop this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,
Chris Fazzina

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From: Amy Bello
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2017 4:24 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Proposed tree cutting in Wethersfield

Dear Mr. Goegel,

As a resident of Wethersfield, I am opposed to the proposed tree cutting in the Folly Brook Nature Area in Wethersfield. Too many aircraft currently use the wrong approach to the runway and fly over Old Wethersfield every day. Removing trees will only aid pilots in using this approach. At the first meeting I heard that there is no way to enforce which way the pilots approach so I don't see any reason to think this will lessen in the future. It is my hope to keep it from increasing by having the trees remain as they are now.

Environmentally speaking, the trees provide a habitat for many wildlife along the river and a sound barrier for those enjoying the waterway. The landscape along the inlet to the Cove and the Cove itself will be negatively impacted for decades by the removal or topping of so many acres of trees.

Finally, the lack of transparency at the first meeting, lack of notice to key agencies, and half-truths presented at the meeting leave me with concern over the governance of the airport in general.

Sincerely,
Amy Morrin Bello

# Wethersfield
# CommUnity
## For The Resistance

Wethersfield
CommUnity
For The Resistance
Wethersfield, CT

HARTFORD CT 061
29 APR 2017 PM 6 L

Dear Mr Goegel,

Please use your best judgement about taking down trees in Wethersfield, where there are limited green spaces.

Please p[illegible]

Colin Goegel
CAA
334 Ella Grasso Tpke
Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT
06096

04/25

Lee G. Kuckro

Colin Goegel
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Re: Brainard Airport Proposal April 25, 2017

Dear Mr. Goegel,

The extensive tree cutting proposed for between 30 qnd 40 acres adjacent to Old Wethersfield is not only a violation of the existing conservation easement, it will facilitate the planned increase of aircraft traffic - a doubling of takeoffs and landings per the Hartford Jet Center - over the **Old Wethersfield Historic District,** a significant adverse impact and impairment of this nationally recognized cultural and historic resource.

Old Wethersfield, the State's largest historic district, was established in 1962 and added to the **National Register of Historic Places** in 1970. The District contains three (3) **National Historic Landmarks**: the Buttolph Williams House, the Joseph Webb House and the Silas Deane House.

The **National Register** and the **National Historic Landmarks** programs are planning tools to protect the Nation's cultural resources from destruction or impairment. The Federal Aviation Administration, the lead agency for the EAs, must provide the **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**, an independent Federal agency, a reasonable opportunity to comment pursuant to the **National Historic Preservation Act of 1966**, section 106, as amended, on actions which may affect or impair the National Register and National Historic Landmark properties.

**The National Historic Preservation Act** also protects sites that are eligible for listing on the **National Register**. The proposed tree cutting and runway expansion, on the banks of the Connecticut River is on a probable pre-colonial native American site and any action that would adversely affect it should be undertaken only after a comprehensive archaeological survey.

Very truly yours, Lee G. Kuckro

From: Julia Murtha
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2017 5:58 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: CAA

Preserving natural habitats and preventing all environmental pollution must be a priority and must trump all efforts to add noise and destruction to the community of Wethersfield; the oldest town in Connecticut.

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**From:** K. Salters-Pedneault
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 25, 2017 1:12 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Plan for Wethersfield trees

To whom it may concern

I am writing to convey my strong disapproval of any tree cutting in the Wethersfield's Folly Brook Natural Area. In an era of climate change, it is precisely backward-thinking plans like this that are leading to the gradual degradation of the environment. I am also, frankly, appalled by the lack of transparency with which this was planned (I was at the first meeting which appeared to be an attempt to completely disenfranchise Hartford residents), and the lack of transparency about the plans for the future of the airport (i.e., the desire to nearly double traffic, which has been hidden from residents).

I care about the safety of pilots and community residents. If safety cannot be ensured without tree cutting in the Folly Brook Natural area then the airport should be closed.

Sincerely,
Kristi Salters-Pedneault

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**From:** John A Gallalee
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 26, 2017 11:57 AM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Valuable Trees

Dear Mr. Goegel,

It has come to my attention that the cutting of many trees has been proposed with the goal of increasing air safety.

I question whether in fact these trees need to be cut, and I strongly urge that a great deal of further study be done before any such irreversible and damaging action is taken.

Sincerely yours,
John A. Gallalee

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From: Sandra Whitaker
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2017 5:21 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Brainard tree trimming.

As a real estate agent in the Wethersfield area, I am very aware of buyers/sellers wants, likes and town value. The ambiance of Wethersfield along the river and the surrounding areas is very important and valuable. Nature has taken many years to give us what we have. To take hundreds of trees down that will affect wildlife, erosion, and the wants of the majority should not be done so planes can land and take off. There has to be a better way and cutting down acres of trees must be a last resort. Thank you.
S Whitaker.

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| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Linda |
| Last Name: | Magora |
| Question or comment? | I object to the proposal to eradicate trees based on environmental reasons, conservation easement violations, lack of supporting evidence for necessity/no accident occurrences at Brainard due to tree obstruction. As a life-long resident of Wethersfield, I strongly support natural preservation which is critical to the health and well-being of residents. Feedback from prior meetings is unfavorable for those who promote this action. |

Clarification. My strong objection to the proposed tree eradication is based on the reasons identified in my email. Proposal contrarian to natural preservation, e.g, threats to flood plain and wild life etc.

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| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Rachel |
| Last Name: | Novak |
| Question or comment? | To Whom It May Concern, I am a member of a Wethersfield Community group which has environmental stewardship as one of its goals. I am writing to express my stance against the deforestation being proposed in town. Our forest areas are vital to our environment. Please do not destroy them. Thank you, Rachel Novak |

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# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
***April, 27th*** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) Gloria McLean

Date: 4/27/17

Comment(s): I firmly oppose the expansion of this airport. Wethersfield is a unique community. Removal of trees is just one more step towards violating the quality of life of its citizens. I lived in Wethersfield for 45 years. I value the quality of life it afforded me and my family. I am forever its champion. Do not rob this community of all that it stands for - history - conservation - education - ambiance. That is precisely what the expansion of this airport would do. Development in and of itself is not the answer. Look at the roads, the malls that have intruded on our lives and are now obsolete. The airport faces similar circumstances in the not too distant future. Expansion and destruction rarely bring the sought after results, and Brainard is by no means worth the risk!

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
**April, 27th** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) Helena L. Reilly

Date: 4/27/17

Comment(s): I have 4 concerns: 1) Environmental 2) Public Health 3) Economic 4) Quality of life

(1) Environmental: I am concerned about the impact to wetlands and wildlife habitat. The thinner tree cover will result in increased pollution from 91 and odor from the waste management plants. Thinner tree cover may also disrupt habitat and result in increased flooding. I am particularly concerned about bird habitat, including endangered species.

(2) Public Health: Thinner tree cover will result in increased pollution from Highway 91 and increased odor/pollution from the waste management plant. This is of great concern to me as an Old Wethersfield resident who lives near the cove. Trees also provide a buffer against noise. Thinner tree cover will result in more traffic noise.

(3) Economic: Historical Tourism is a significant revenue source for Old Wethersfield. Many visitors come to visit museums and visit shops and to eat. If the Cove becomes unattractive and unappealing, businesses and non-profits will suffer. Other visitors come for recreation: boating, biking and walking in Old W'field. If they stop coming, businesses and restaurants and cafes lose revenue.

(4) Last but not least: cutting down trees near 91 impacts my quality of life as an Old W'field resident. I walk by the Cove most days. I love the beauty. Tree cutting will make the Cove uglier. We'll see the waste treatment plants. It will affect wildlife and habitat. And I will experience more highway noise without the noise buffer. Also I am very concerned about increased pollution from I-91.

Last, I am very concerned that there is not an ordinance in Wethersfield to replant trees. Can we create one? How can we get this same protection in W'field?

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
**April, 27th** (please circle the date you attended)

Name: (optional) Jay

Date: 4/27/17

Comment(s):

I moved to town 1 year ago and have loved every second of it. Walkable streets, maintained parks, and fantastic activities put on by town organizations. All of these feature are why my young family moved to town.

I constantly have small aircraft flying directly over my home. The voluntary flight path around our small section of town is routinely broken.

With plans being discussed to increase flight volume I worry this will impact home values in this section of town.

The city of Hartford begging for financial assistance, would be better served to develop this land and generate some much needed tax revenue.

Please strongly consider voting to disallow the "selective" cutting of trees in Wethersfield.

Thank you

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

# COMMENT FORM

***Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal***
***Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)***
*Public Hearing Meeting*
***April, 27th*** (please circle the date you attended)

Permanently recorded & submitted on website May 22.

Name: (optional) Lisa Galinski

Address: West Hartford, CT

Email:

Telephone:

Date: 4/27/17

Comment(s): Trees at issue MUST be conserved to the absolute maximum. All legal requirements of this process must be upheld. My comments:

(*) TREES ARE THE LUNGS OF OUR COMMUNITIES (*)

(1) CAA and CHA must go back and get additional first-hand information from the site that is relevant to the environmental impacts at issue. ~~The~~ U.S. Supreme Court precedent requires a "hard look" at environmental impacts and this requirement has not been met here, including NOT identifying trees that must be removed under ~~FAR Part 77~~ and FAA Design Standards.

(2) More stringent environmental impacts must be upheld because this area's role as endangered species.

(3) Risk-severe risk - of riverbank destabilization + flooding due to the risks of tree removal in this area.

(4) Environmental Justice - special benefits of green space in urban areas, especially in an area designated as an EJ area due to urban asthma rates.

(5) "Mitigation" under the Hartford Ordinance will never justly mitigate clearing of mature trees. Loss of mature trees takes a human LIFETIME to regrow.

(6) We must protect at state level, rather than relying on federal standards or wetland permits — which are at risk due to the short-sided destructive incompetency of Trump administration

- Comments can be submitted on this form or through http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com

Many of the cities of our nation turned their backs to nearby waterways by polluting them and by creating buildings that literally faced the opposite direction. In Hartford, we have made and are continuing to make significant strides to protect and enhance ourcity's connection to the adjacent and state's largest waterway. Adriaen's landing connects the science center, constitution plaza and downtown to the Connecticut River and attracts hundreds of thousands of people a year.

This area is finally returning to a healthy state with bald eagles returning and now frequently being visible in the old growth trees along the river. As a Hartford resident, it is one of our greatest assets along with the ecology it requires, especially these trees. They protect and promote revitalization of the natural habitat. This is an airport that serves few but these changes will impact many. The City's Planning and Zoning department has this area targeted for development that will increase access to our river and reduce the scarring of the past.

It is a shame this was not well publicized as I know of many people that are enjoying the resurgence of the river and would be particularly bothered. I strongly oppose this proposal.

Tony Koos
Capital Avenue
Vice Chair, Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission
Resident, Hartford, CT

*From the Desk of:*

**Bernadine Silvers**
**52P South Prospect Street**
**Hartford, CT 06106**

I am writing to testify against the proposal of the Connecticut Airport Authority to cut down acres and acres of trees in our urban environment.

By way of background, I am a longtime resident of the Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood of the City of Hartford. I am active in a number of civic organizations, including Hartford 2000, the Hartford Redevelopment Agency (where I am a mayoral appointee), and CSS/CON Neighborhood Revitalization Zone.

Trees are our environmental lungs and filters. The Sheldon/Charter Oak Community is already burdened with terrible smells from the Plant adjacent to Brainard Field. I am concerned that once the trees are removed, the air quality will be worse, and the odors will be more frequent and more intense. Little to no serious attention has been paid to the matter of odor control in the draft environmental impact analysis, despite the fact that there is a nearby Plant well known to produce strong smells. For those reasons, I believe that the environmental impact analysis is legally deficient.

Many residents, living in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods within blocks of Brainard Field, would no doubt feel the same way and express these doubts if this meeting were better publicized and held in a Hartford location. Our defense of these trees highlights our shared concern about whether environmental justice is truly served when the needs of our most vulnerable citizens are not even considered.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: Saundra Kasper
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 2:44 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Disputing tree removal

The trees are homes to wildlife. This alone I understand has no bearing on the desire for more $$. Why would they care about the environment when their concern is filling their pockets. This is precious land and the community that exists around it is equally so. The impact would be tremendous with noise, increased air pollution, devastation to all wildlife and to humans....! If plaines can presently fly in and out of the existing airport, make some changes to the layout there to accommodate more. Don't destroy what we have that's irreplaceable, alter THEIR existing layout.
My guess is that's too costly and inconvenient for their liking. I say, too bad!!

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| | |
|---|---|
| First Name: | Dan |
| Last Name: | Ciarcia |
| Question or comment? | Hi, I attended the recent meeting in Wethersfield to present options for tree clearing. I am against any kind of cutting at this point. The presentation did not substantiate the urgent need and the immense amount of cutting appears to be an overreach of what is necessary. This tree clearing not only appears unnecessary for airport use, but it there are many unanswered questions. 1) The immense cost. There is a heavy price tag for removing 30 acres of trees and this will likely fall on taxpayers (whether the funds come from the federal government, state government of city government, it is a cost to taxpayers). Why isn't the clearing being paid for by the people who use the airport - put a tax on each departure. 2) The even more immense loss of benefit. The environmental cost of destroying 30 acres of forest in a sensitive ecosystem is not being considered at all by the proponents of this clearing. The trees pose a critical role in health of the river, absorbing stormwater, absorbing surge, wind break, shading in the summer and so many other environmental benefits. These benefits can be translated into dollars and there is no accounting for the loss of these benefits in the proposal. Therefore, it will surely fall on the shoulders of the citizens of Hartford and Wethersfield. The airport should levy a tax on the flight departures to compensate Hartford and Wethersfield for the great loss in financial benefit. 3) Its one thing to consider the dollars lost as detailed above, but the harm to the environment is massive. It is foolish for the airport to claim that no significant harm will result in the loss of 30 acres of trees. Just ridiculous. The report was obviously not conducted in an unbiased and scientific manner. And, these trees cannot just be replaced with seedlings or an alternative species that stays short - that reduces the biodiversity and will drive out wildlife |

that lives in these areas. I reiterate my extreme opposition to the removal or trimming of trees on the lands being proposed --- this would be a loss of great magnitude for many citizens, animals and river ecosystem, and only to serve a very tiny population of hobbyists and flying enthusiasts. Wethersfield Citizen

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**From:** Jim Woodworth [mailto:jkwoodworth5@att.net]
**Sent:** Saturday, May 20, 2017 10:42 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>; Jean Loewenstein <rloewenstein2@chacompanies.com>
**Subject:** brainard Airport Tree Removal Project Public Comment

Hello Mr. Goegel,

Attached is a letter that I would like included in the public comment being gathered on the Brainard Airport Tree Removal Project.

In this letter, I propose a flood plain management plan involving The Nature Conservancy, the City of Hartford Forestry Division, the Knox Foundation and the Great Meadows Conservation Trust.

Please feel free to contact me, if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Jim Woodworth
Stewardship Chair
Great Meadows Conservation Trust

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To: Colin Goegel
Supervising Engineer
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
cgoegel@ctairports.org

From: Jim Woodworth
Stewardship Chair, Great Meadows Conservation Trust

Re: Brainard Airport Tree Removal Project, Public Comment

Date: May 21, 2017

Dear Mr. Goegel,
I am writing to advocate for an ongoing "Brainard Airport Flood Plain Forest Management Program"

The program, as I envision it, would combine the requirements of the Easement held by the Nature Conservancy on the City of Hartford property in the "Folly Brook Nature Area" (areas A, B, C, D) within the Town of Wethersfield, and the City of Hartford Tree Cutting Ordinance as it applies to all other approach areas within the City of Hartford.

The Easement, as you know, prescribes the tree cutting that can be done in the approach to Runway 2, and required a management plan to be set up between TNC and the City of Hartford to cover tree cutting in the 20:1 and 34:1 Approach Surfaces in your project map "Area 2."
The Approach Surfaces to runway 29 in Area 2 and the Approach Surfaces to Runway 20 are subject to the City of Hartford tree cutting ordinance that requires mitigation, including 1 for 1 replacement of trees cut.

I would like to propose that the CAA draw on the expertise of scientists from The Nature Conservancy (Christian Marks and Dave Gumbart) and the experts in the City of Hartford Public Works Forestry Division to devise a low impact and sustainable flood plain forest management plan.

Elements of that plan might draw on a 1961 scientific study of the Folly Brook Conservation Area conducted by William Neiring, famous botanist at Connecticut College, with follow up in 1969 after the construction of I91. A draft of a report of this study is available on the Great Meadows Conservation Trust website: http://www.gmct.org/preserves/studies/neiring_folly_brook_study.pdf

The study documents the 15' belt of black willow trees that existed along the bank of the river. This species was observed being shaded out further inland by the maples and cottonwoods that dominate the forest today. Cutting cottonwoods and maples while planting black willow in the critical approach surface areas. Black willows would sustain the wildlife habitat, erosion control and flood water calming functions of the forest, without penetrating the approach surface at some future time.

If the tall trees that require removal were topped and girdled, the resulting snags would provide wildlife habitat for birds as they decayed, while providing flood water calming and transitional erosion control.

If elderberry and button bush shrubs, observed in the 1961 study were also re-introduced, they would add blooms for pollinators and berries for birds and small mammals, enriching the wildlife habitat.

The initial stage of management, requiring topping and girdling of mature trees, would be handled by qualified arborist contractors. An ongoing program of forest management might well be accomplished by a group of city youth managed by the Knox Foundation to sweep through annually and eliminate maple and cottonwood saplings that might spring up and attempt to take over. Maybe some Wethersfield young people could be involved as well, since the Folly Brook Conservation area is in Wethersfield, though owned by the city of Hartford. Note that the Folly Brook Nature Area was designated in 1956 by the City of Hartford through the efforts of Betty Knox, benefactor of the Knox foundation, and Eleanor Buck Wolf, founding member of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust

I urge you to consider such a plan that involves important stakeholders, has the potential to turn a negative environmental impact into a positive impact, and could generate positive publicity for the airport.

If I can be of any help in developing such a flood plain forest management plan, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Jim Woodworth
Stewardship Chair
Great Meadows Conservation Trust

From: Pam Albertsen
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2017 8:45 PM
To: Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
Subject: Brainard tree removal NO

Dear sir,
I have traveled along the Connecticut River on boats , over bridges and walked along numerous trails . My most memorable experience was approaching Brainard airport on a Piper Arrow over the trees and watching a mature Bald Eagle soar benefits us. These trees have been present along the banks of this magnificent river long before the airport and serve many important ecological functions, all of which I am sure you have been appraised of. They are also beautiful and add to the character of the river and our state. Yes , trees must be considered when flying , but pilots are aware of them and take them into account during their flight. Please, DO NOT remove these beautiful and beneficial resources.
Thank you, Pamela Albertsen

---

**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 1:57 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Trees near Connecticut River in Hartford and at Bluff Point State Park in Groton,

Mr. Colin Goegel,

I am taking this opportunity to express my dissent and urge you to withdraw your plans to cut down a huge amount of trees along the Connecticut River in Hartford and at Bluff Point State Park in Groton. These trees provide invaluable resources to the local land and ecology and many of them are protected. Blindly removing them is stupid and dimwitted and unlawful. I'm sure a more thoughtful and meaningful plan can be proposed that achieves your organization's goals while preserving the integrity of our treasured trees.

Thank you,
Anna Moschella

---

**From:** Anne Penniman
**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 4:33 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Airport trees

Dear Mr Goegel,
Please consider protecting public lands and invaluable habitat by rejecting the aggressive tree cutting at Brainard Airport.

Thank you,
**Anne Lacouture Penniman, ASLA**

---

**From:** Greenblatt Cynthia
**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 2:28 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Brainard Airport

TO: CT Airport Authority
RE: Brainard Airport Obstruction Removal Environmental Assessment

The proposal for removing trees that have been identified as obstructions in your report is flawed and recommendations are unnecessary.

First, there is a questions as to why these tress are considered obstructions. Presently there are close to 50,000 take offs and landings at Brainard Airport each year without any danger to pilots or property owners. The proposal you suggest, the "modified alternative" or Proposed Action, is not slated for any possible implementation until at the earliest 2019. There is no apparent danger or urgency for the pilots, planes or people in the operation of Brainard Airport and there is a real question about the airport's future and the use of the property it occupies.

Brainard Airport is used by private pilots and businesses for their personal pleasure and profit. Why should CT taxpayers in these difficult economic times continue to support an operation that loses money and benefits a small few wealthy individuals? According to the CAA statement of revenues submitted for the year ending June 30, 2016 Brainard Airport had a **net operating loss** of $941,275.00. Brainard Airport took in less in airline revenues then it paid in salaries. The airport could not exist without taxpayer subsidies and denies the city of Hartford needed tax revenue and access to the CT River. In short, the airport is obsolete as the main hub of transportation for CT moved to Bradley Airport long ago.

The Environmental Assessment that accompanies your report should be the subject of scientific review and possible legal action for its inaccurate and outrageous findings. In section 4-3 of your assessment you refer to Brainard as "Windham Airport". In section 5-18 you report on the circumstances surrounding "Waterbury-Oxford Airport". These gross errors suggest a copy and paste job that threatens the integrity of any of your conclusions. And what of those conclusions? The evaluation is supposed to "allow the FAA to determine if the impacts of the Proposed Action are substantial or could be implemented without significant impact". In eighteen different categories you incredibly found no significant impact to the cutting of almost 20 acres of trees in a pristine floodplain forest within the borders of Wethersfield. No impact to air quality. No impact to fish, wildlife or plants. No impact to the floodplain. No impact to water quality. No impact to wetlands. No secondary impacts. No impact to endangered species.
It defies logic and reason to think that these conclusions are valid.

Considering the circumstances and inaccuracies I urge the CAA and the FAA to reject the premise and conclusions of this report and the call to cut these trees. There is no pressing need to remove any trees to insure pilot safety and the Environmental Assessment is inaccurate and flawed. Citizens have to come to realize that the costs of Brainard Airport to the CT economy, the Wethersfield community and the environment are too great.

Cynthia Greenblatt

**From:** Kaci White
**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 12:51 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Brainard Draft EA comment

Mr. Goegel:

I am writing to comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal for Hartford-Brainard Airport ("Draft EA"). The CAA should adopt the No Action Alternative unless new, nuanced alternatives are presented in a revised EA.

The CAA has not explained why trees that have been in place for years at their current heights suddenly pose a safety risk to pilots, who continue to voluntarily choose to fly over the area of proposed tree removal. However, if the CAA does want to trim or remove trees, or "obstructions" as they are classified, it needs to present more nuanced, less destructive alternatives than the ones provided in the Draft EA. The Draft EA offers only three possible actions: the "No Action Alternative," the "Full Obstruction Removal Alternative," and the recommended plan, the "Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative."

Only one option, the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative, is presented as viable by the CAA. The Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative lacks the nuance and long-term environmental planning that is necessary for public health, environmental resource preservation, and the state's financial future. If the No Action Alternative is not taken, the CAA should draft a revised EA with nuanced, strategic environmental planning done transparently in collaboration with residents and conservationists.

Wetlands Protection is Crucial

The Draft EA states that the recommended Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative would result in potential temporary and long-term destruction to wetlands. Wetland well-being is not negotiable. Wetlands foster biodiversity, provide natural flood protection, and filter water. Developers and industrialists have already destroyed wetlands to an alarming extent across our state since European settlement, and we can't afford to diminish their health and resilience any further. State agencies, including the CAA, should be prioritizing wetland preservation. Wetland restoration is expensive and takes years to implement. Preventing wetland destruction in the first place serves the public good by improving water quality, maintaining biodiversity of plants and animals, and preventing property damage in extreme flood events. With climate change already causing more extreme storms than we are used to, taking the utmost care to protect our natural protections against flooding is not only smart, it is also cost-effective and forward-thinking. Any plan that poses wetland destruction should not be considered or implemented because of this impact.

Draft EA Lacks Transparency and Accountability

The Draft EA does not outline how the public can track implementation if a tree removal plan is approved to ensure that impacts are minimized. It also does not outline a plan for how CAA will be held accountable to follow a plan. At a minimum, for any proposed plan, the public needs to know: 1) how many trees would be removed; 2) how many trees would be trimmed; 3) when the removals would happen — ahead

of time; 4) what actually gets removed; 5) whether the removals have the necessary permits, easements, and approvals; and 6) whether those permits, easements, and approvals are actually followed.

CAA must be more transparent. For example, the CAA stated that it doesn't yet have an estimate of how many trees would be impacted under the recommended alternative. This is foundational information that the public needs to know before a plan is approved and set into motion, not afterward. CAA should create an open, current method of communication with the public about any tree removals that take place so that residents can easily access up-to-date information and hold the CAA accountable throughout the process.

Floodplain Forest Management Plan

The Draft EA does not mention a floodplain forest management plan. It should, in order to reduce the impacts that would result under the current Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative. Trimming and removing trees is a temporary solution that by its own admission the CAA says will need to be repeated over and over, at taxpayer expense and at the expense of the environment. More options beyond the three extremes presented need to be considered and detailed in a revised EA draft. A revised EA should include at least one alternative that incorporates creation of a floodplain forest management plan in cooperation with conservationists and residents. This would provide less expensive, more ecologically responsible, long-term solution to CAA's safety concerns.

Alter Brainard's Facilities and Use Instead

The No Action Alternative is truly an option here. The CAA should be more creative to find ways to address its safety concerns without creating short- or long-term damage to wetlands, reducing oxygen production, creating thermal pollution, and more impacts that would result from tree trimming and removal as presented in the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative.

One of the disadvantages the Draft EA lists to the No Action Alternative is that is "retains potential hazards to airport users." CAA: how could you alter Brainard use to safely operate within the existing environmental landscape, which you currently do every day?

Another disadvantage listed for this option is that it "retains a potential hazard to people and property on the ground surrounding the airport." Again, CAA: be more creative about how you can change the existing human-created facilities and airport use patterns to safely operate.

A third disadvantage claimed to the No Action Alternative is that it "does not comply with FAA design standards or grant assurances." CAA has not presented other options for FAA compliance, which must exist, because planes currently fly over this area every day. (I know: I hear and see them above my neighborhood, when according to the CAA pilots are told to fly over the river instead!) CAA could simply not allow flights over this path unless there is an emergency. There are other flight paths into the airport that don't have tall, beautiful, oxygen-making, asthma-reducing habitats in the way. Incentivize or enforce those alternatives. Regarding the potential loss of FAA grants: this airport does not offer flights to the general public. If private businesses and pilots want to use the airport, they should fund it. We need a paradigm shift toward protecting our natural resources and working creatively to find solutions around them.

A final disadvantage listed for the No Action Alternative is that it "risks future FAA funding for improvements to the airport." That risk is preferable to me as a Wethersfield and Connecticut citizen than long-term environmental degradation. You can't buy wetlands and tall, established trees. Those resources take time and they require care. If the airport is not financially sustainable on its own, then that is CAA's issue to creatively handle. We cannot continue assuming that seemingly small degradations to the environment here and there are fine simply because they can get approved and permitted. The very regulatory system that classifies trees as obstructions rather than as vital components of human health is out of the scope of this comment request, but it is not a smart way forward. We can't continue destructive twentieth-century style development practices just because they have been done before.

Conclusion

The CAA should adopt the No Action Alternative outlined in the Draft EA for Brainard Airport tree removal. The CAA's Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative is not nuanced, detailed, or sensitive enough to reduce preventable environmental impacts. If the CAA wants to move toward some type of tree removal, it should collaborate with local conservationists and citizens to draft a revised Draft EA. At a minimum, CAA should learn more about long-term floodplain forest management strategies that would not only preserve this important area, but would prevent the future expense of more environmental impact studies and actual tree removals in the future. This would be a far more environmentally and financially sound option that the CAA completely neglected to include in the Draft EA.

A final note: the Draft EA mentions airports other than Hartford-Brainard in its impact review. Section 5.18 erroneously mentions Waterbury-Oxford Airport: "These [Wild and Scenic Rivers] are not in the vicinity of Waterbury-Oxford; therefore there will be no impact to any designated Wild and Scenic Rivers." Section 4.3 mentions Windham Airport, in error: "The habitat assessment for the Windham Airport involved agency coordination with the CTDEEP's Natural Diversity Database…." While these errors don't substantially change any findings in the Draft EA, the lack of attention to this document raises questions to how many other errors or omissions — including ones that aren't as easily noticeable as copying and pasting the wrong airport in from another document — makes this entire review less trustworthy. The CAA needs to be more creative, prioritize the environment, and gain the trust of the public by laying out a transparent process to oversee any action taken. Connecticut citizens deserve to have their environmental resources protected by state agencies, not treated as consumable commodities.

Sincerely,
Kaci White

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**From:** Klimaszewski, Robin
**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 2:06 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Save the Trees!

Please save our trees - we need them for our Eagles & other wildlife. Please - do not cut them down!

Thank you.
**Robin S Klimaszewski**

---

**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 3:56 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** CT Needs Trees, Not Airports

To: Mr. Colin Goegel, Supervising Engineer
CT Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Mr. Goegel,

I continue, unfortunately, to read about plans for massive tree cutting and habitat destruction at Brainard Airport and Bluff Point Park even after it has been shown to be a) environmentally unsound, b) aesthetically unsound, and c) unnecessary. Why does this persist? In the case of Hartford's Brainard, could it have anything to do with the "development" plans bandied about by Hartford Mayor and the MDC?

In any case, we need the woodlands and habitat - if push comes to shove we don't really need the airports. So either dramatically scale back these plans or, if "safety" concerns require the proposed level of destruction to accommodate air traffic, then close down the airports. We need the trees and habitat, not more planes and flights.

Kevin Gough

---

**From:** Jeff Bridges
**Sent:** Monday, May 22, 2017 2:26 PM
**To:** Colin Goegel <cgoegel@ctairports.org>
**Subject:** Town of Wethersfield Comments on EA Obstruction Removal Brainard Airport

Mr. Goegel

Attached are the comments from the Town of Wethersfield on the Draft EA for Obstruction Removal at Brainard Airport.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards
Jeff Bridges
Town Manager

4/29/17
Dear State Senators and Representatives,

We, the undersigned residents of Connecticut, OPPOSE the Connecticut Airport Authority preliminary plan to remove a large number of healthy trees at and near several airports around the state.
According to Sara Bronin, trustee of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment and Andrew Minikowski, legal fellow at the Connecticut Fund for the Environment based in New Haven "The proposal for Hartford's Brainard Airport would remove at least 40 acres of trees, many of which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River. The area has served as a nesting site for bald eagles in recent years and many of the trees are located on protected lands including the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area and property held under Nature Conservancy conservation easements."

We call upon you to require the Connecticut Airport Authority to develop new plans that maintain airport safety while protecting our precious natural resources of the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound coastline."

| NAME | SIGNATURE | ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Alexandra Shaheen | Alexandra Shaheen | 1673 State St, Hamden, CT |
| David Leenhouts | David L | 12 Facon Hill Rd Burlington, CT |
| Debbie Antoon | Debbie Antoon | 22 Ridge Lane Shelton, CT 06484 |
| Joelle Goetz | | 11 Whittlesey, Willimantic, CT |
| Mary Ellroy | | 393 Rowayton Ave Norwalk 06854 |
| Anne Sommer | Anne Sommer | 23 Wilkins St. Hamden, CT 06517 |
| Sarah Whitson | Sarah Whitson | 75 Ingram ST, Hamden 06517 |
| David Rabinowitz | | Hamden CT |
| Rose Mary Sullivan | | 8 Sandview Ave, Norwalk 06855 |
| Sabine Harris | | 607 Longhill Rd, Guilford, CT |
| Linda Anderson | Linda Anderson | 948 Moose Hill Rd, Guilford, CT |

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| NAME | SIGNATURE | ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Charles Magly | Charles H. Magly | 948 Moore Hill Rd Guilford |
| John Meeske | John R. Meeske | 446 Amity Rd. Woodbridge |
| Nancy R. Woodington | Nancy R. Woodington | 446 Amity Rd. Woodbridge |
| Meredith J Linhardsen | [illegible] | 2612 North Ave, A6 B. Port CT |
| Marisa Kalt | Marisa Kalt | 172 West Rock Ave New Haven, CT 06515 |
| Elizabeth Eldridge | Elizabeth Eldridge | 13 Attawanhood Trail Amston, CT 06231 |
| Rick Eldridge | [illegible] | " |
| Glen E[illegible] | [illegible] | 90 Lundy Lane Rocky Hill CT |
| Nick Jones | [illegible] | 6 Hughes Cir, Ansonia, CT |
| Tom Nichols | [illegible] | 170 Pattison Ave Stratford CT |
| F. Greaney | [illegible] | 1985 West St. #24 Southington CT |

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| NAME | SIGNATURE | ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Roye A. Bourke | [signature] | 184 Hemlock Rd New Haven 06515 |
| Christina Santoni | [signature] | 5 Maplewood, New Haven 06515 |
| Meg Birmingham | [signature] | 47 Hemlock Rd New Haven 06515 |
| [signature] | JEREMY HILL | 381 Weatherly Trl Guilford 06437 |
| JOSEPH SLANSKY | [signature] | 22 RIDGE LN, SHELTON 06484 |
| Rich Ruby | [signature] | 76 Old Dike Rd Trumbull 0661 |
| Evelyn Duffner | [signature] | 49 Spice Bush Lane Mfd. 06461 |
| Janet Epstein | [signature] | 76 Old Dike Rd Trumbull 06611 |
| Jayson Uppal | [signature] | 101 Mansfield St New Haven 06511 |
| Marisa Page | Marisa Page | 74 Sea Street New Haven |
| Julie Dowe | | 58 Lake St Hamden |
| Betsy Bruneau | [signature] | 63 Grist Mill Cr Guilford, CT |

# APPENDIX C
# THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

# Species List for NDDB Request: Brainard

| Scientific Name | Common Name | State Status |
|---|---|---|
| **Terrestrial Community - Other Classification** | | |
| Floodplain forest | <null> | <null> |
| **Vertebrate Animal** | | |
| Falco sparverius | American kestrel | T |
| Haliaeetus leucocephalus | Bald eagle | T |

E = Endangered, T = Threatened, SC = Special Concern, * Extirpated

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Connecticut Airport Authority - Brainard Airport

## *IPaC Trust Resource Report*

Generated September 17, 2015 01:37 PM MDT

US Fish & Wildlife Service

# IPaC Trust Resource Report

## Project Description

NAME

Connecticut Airport Authority - Brainard Airport

PROJECT CODE

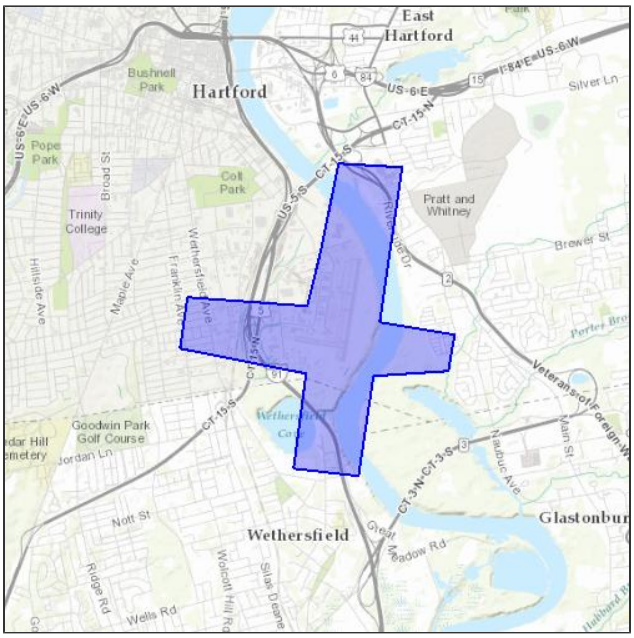
HU3EP-U6Q45-CRHFE-N2QXR-KUQIXA

LOCATION

Hartford County, Connecticut

DESCRIPTION

Environmental Assessment for Obstruction Removal and Lighting




## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Contact Information

Species in this report are managed by:

**New England Ecological Services Field Office**
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301-5094
(603) 223-2541

# Endangered Species

Proposed, candidate, threatened, and endangered species that are managed by the Endangered Species Program and should be considered as part of an effect analysis for this project.

This unofficial species list is for informational purposes only and does not fulfill the requirements under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, which states that Federal agencies are required to "request of the Secretary of Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action." This requirement applies to projects which are conducted, permitted or licensed by any Federal agency.

A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can be obtained by returning to this project on the IPaC website and requesting an Official Species List from the regulatory documents section.

## Mammals

**Northern Long-eared Bat** Myotis septentrionalis **Threatened**

CRITICAL HABITAT
**No critical habitat** has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=A0JE

## Critical Habitats

Potential effects to critical habitat(s) within the project area must be analyzed along with the endangered species themselves.

There is no critical habitat within this project area

# Migratory Birds

Birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Any activity which results in the take of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1). There are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured.

You are responsible for complying with the appropriate regulations for the protection of birds as part of this project. This involves analyzing potential impacts and implementing appropriate conservation measures for all project activities.

**American Bittern** Botaurus lentiginosus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding
https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0F3

**Bald Eagle** Haliaeetus leucocephalus **Bird of conservation concern**
Year-round
https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B008

**Black-billed Cuckoo** Coccyzus erythropthalmus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding
https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HI

**Blue-winged Warbler** Vermivora pinus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding

**Canada Warbler** Wilsonia canadensis **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding

**Fox Sparrow** Passerella iliaca **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Wintering

**Least Bittern** Ixobrychus exilis **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding

**Peregrine Falcon** Falco peregrinus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding
https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FU

**Pied-billed Grebe** Podilymbus podiceps **Bird of conservation concern**
Year-round

**Prairie Warbler** Dendroica discolor **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Breeding

**Purple Sandpiper** Calidris maritima **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Wintering

**Rusty Blackbird** Euphagus carolinus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Wintering

**Short-eared Owl** Asio flammeus **Bird of conservation concern**
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HD

**Upland Sandpiper** Bartramia longicauda **Bird of conservation concern**

Season: Breeding

https://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HC

**Wood Thrush** Hylocichla mustelina **Bird of conservation concern**

Season: Breeding

**Worm Eating Warbler** Helmitheros vermivorum **Bird of conservation concern**

Season: Breeding

# Refuges

Any activity proposed on National Wildlife Refuge lands must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. If your project overlaps or otherwise impacts a Refuge, please contact that Refuge to discuss the authorization process.

Refuge data is unavailable at this time.

# Wetlands

Impacts to NWI wetlands and other aquatic habitats from your project may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal Statutes.

Project proponents should discuss the relationship of these requirements to their project with the Regulatory Program of the appropriate U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District.

DATA LIMITATIONS

The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

DATA EXCLUSIONS

Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters. Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tuberficid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

DATA PRECAUTIONS

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

Wetland data is unavailable at this time.

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Federal Aviation Administration
New England Region

12 New England Executive Park
Burlington, MA 01803

December 6, 2016

Thomas Chapman
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New England Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301

Dear. Mr. Chapman:

The Connecticut Airport Authority proposes the removal of trees in the vicinity of several airports, in an effort to promote safe use of these airports. The Federal Aviation Administration may fund these tree removal projects.

The FAA has determined the tree clearing project is unlikely to adversely affect the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and submits the attached Streamline Consultation Forms for USFWS review.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you have any questions on this matter. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Doucette
Manager of Environmental Programs
FAA New England Region, Airports Division

# Northern Long-Eared Bat 4(d) Rule Streamlined Consultation Form

Federal agencies should use this form for the optional streamlined consultation framework for the northern long-eared bat (NLEB). This framework allows federal agencies to rely upon the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) January 5, 2016, intra-Service Programmatic Biological Opinion (BO) on the final 4(d) rule for the NLEB for section 7(a)(2) compliance by: (1) notifying the USFWS that an action agency will use the streamlined framework; (2) describing the project with sufficient detail to support the required determination; and (3) enabling the USFWS to track effects and determine if re-initiation of consultation is required per 50 CFR 402.16.

This form is not necessary if an agency determines that a proposed action will have no effect to the NLEB or if the USFWS has concurred in writing with an agency's determination that a proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the NLEB (i.e., the standard informal consultation process). Actions that may cause prohibited incidental take require separate formal consultation. Providing this information does not address section 7(a)(2) compliance for any other listed species.

| **Information to Determine 4(d) Rule Compliance:** | **YES** | **NO** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the project occur wholly outside of the WNS Zone[1]? | ☐ | ☒ |
| 2. Have you contacted the appropriate agency[2] to determine if your project is near known hibernacula or maternity roost trees? | ☒ | ☐ |
| 3. Could the project disturb hibernating NLEBs in a known hibernaculum? | ☐ | ☒ |
| 4. Could the project alter the entrance or interior environment of a known hibernaculum? | ☐ | ☒ |
| 5. Does the project remove any trees within 0.25 miles of a known hibernaculum at any time of year? | ☐ | ☒ |
| 6. Would the project cut or destroy known occupied maternity roost trees, or any other trees within a 150-foot radius from the maternity roost tree from June 1 through July 31. | ☐ | ☒ |

You are eligible to use this form if you have answered yes to question #1 **or** yes to question #2 **and** no to questions 3, 4, 5 and 6. The remainder of the form will be used by the USFWS to track our assumptions in the BO.

## Agency and Applicant[3]

*Mr. Richard Doucette, Environmental Program Manager, Airports Division*

*USDOT Federal Aviation Administration – New England Region*

*(781) 238-7613*

*richard.doucette@faa.gov*

[1] http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/pdf/WNSZone.pdf
[2] See http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/nhisites.html
[3] If applicable - only needed for federal actions with applicants (e.g., for a permit, etc.) who are party to the consultation.

**Project Name**: *Hartford-Brainard Airport Tree Obstruction Removal*

**Project Location**: *Hartford, CT 41° 44' 12" N 072° 38'58" W*

**Basic Project Description** (provide narrative below or attach additional information):

*The proposed action includes removal of trees on and surrounding the Hartford-Brainard Airport that penetrate the federally-defined airport airspace. The project included an alternative evaluation to determine the critical areas of tree removal necessary to maintain a safe operating environment. The proposed removal includes both tree clearing and selective thinning of tall trees, with retention of stumps and undergrowth. For the purposes of this form, all areas of removal will be included in the estimate of 'forest conversion'. The tree obstructions removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport includes approximately 40 acres. These estimates are conservative; it is likely the final acreage of forest conversion will be less.*

*All removals will occur between December and March; there is no forest conversion between April through October or June through July.*

*All removals are for safety purposes and to satisfy Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards. None of these removals are for the purposes of timber harvest.*

| **General Project Information** | **YES** | **NO** |
|---|---|---|
| Does the project occur within 0.25 miles of a known hibernaculum? | ☐ | ☒ |
| Does the project occur within 150 feet of a known maternity roost tree? | ☐ | ☒ |
| Does the project include forest conversion[4]? (if yes, report acreage below) | ☒ | ☐ |
| Estimated total acres of forest conversion | 40 acres | |
| If known, estimated acres[5] of forest conversion from April 1 to October 31 | 0 acres | |
| If known, estimated acres of forest conversion from June 1 to July 31[6] | 0 acres | |
| Does the project include timber harvest? (if yes, report acreage below) | ☐ | ☒ |
| Estimated total acres of timber harvest | | |
| If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from April 1 to October 31 | | |
| If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from June 1 to July 31 | | |
| Does the project include prescribed fire? (if yes, report acreage below) | ☐ | ☒ |
| Estimated total acres of prescribed fire | | |
| If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from April 1 to October 31 | | |
| If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from June 1 to July 31 | | |
| Does the project install new wind turbines? (if yes, report capacity in MW below) | ☐ | ☒ |
| Estimated wind capacity (MW) | | |

Agency Determination:

By signing this form, the action agency determines that this project may affect the NLEB, but that any resulting incidental take of the NLEB is not prohibited by the final 4(d) rule.

[4] Any activity that temporarily or permanently removes suitable forested habitat, including, but not limited to, tree removal from development, energy production and transmission, mining, agriculture, etc. (see page 48 of the BO).
[5] If the project removes less than 10 trees and the acreage is unknown, report the acreage as less than 0.1 acre.
[6] If the activity includes tree clearing in June and July, also include those acreage in April to October.

If the USFWS does not respond within 30 days from submittal of this form, the action agency may presume that its determination is informed by the best available information and that its project responsibilities under 7(a)(2) with respect to the NLEB are fulfilled through the USFWS January 5, 2016, Programmatic BO. The action agency will update this determination annually for multi-year activities.

The action agency understands that the USFWS presumes that all activities are implemented as described herein. The action agency will promptly report any departures from the described activities to the appropriate USFWS Field Office. The action agency will provide the appropriate USFWS Field Office with the results of any surveys conducted for the NLEB. Involved parties will promptly notify the appropriate USFWS Field Office upon finding a dead, injured, or sick NLEB.

Signature: _____ Date Submitted: _____

# APPENDIX D
# PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY

Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal
Notice of Public Information Meeting

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) will be holding a Public Information Meeting for the Hartford- Brainard Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal. At this meeting, information on the overall project and the study's findings, including the Preferred Alternative, will be presented. The meeting will be held on Thursday January 12th, 2017 at the Wethersfield Town Hall (505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109). In case the meeting is canceled due to snow, a secondary date for the meeting will be held on Thursday January 26th, 2017. The doors open at 6:30PM with the presentation beginning at 7:00PM. The Environmental Assessment for Tree Clearing will be available at http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/.

# Affidavit of Publication

State of Connecticut

Jan. 5, 2017

County of Hartford

I, Gregory R. Barden, do solemnly swear that I am the General Manager of the Wethersfield Rare Reminder, a newspaper published weekly in the State of Connecticut, and that from my own personal knowledge and reference to the files of said publication, the advertisement of Notice of Public Meeting – Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal was inserted on Dec. 29, 2016 and Jan. 5, 2017.

In the amount of: $146.64

Gregory R. Barden, General Manager

Subscribed and sworn before me on 1/5/2017

Notary Public

My Commission Expires on 1/31/2017

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**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal**

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

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**State of Connecticut**

**January 09, 2017**

**County of Hartford**

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On Dates as Follows:

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Full Run

Janet Tarasuk Sales Assistant,
Janet Tarasuk

Subscribed and sworn before me on January 09, 2017

Renee Janes **Notary Public**

RENEE N. JANES
NOTARY PUBLIC
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES MAR. 31, 2018

Order # - 4654404

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**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal Notice of Public Information Meeting**

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# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chris Donnelly | — | 203 927 3052 | chris.donnelly@ct.gov |
| Peter Alessi | — | 860-680-3297 | PMA112355@GMAIL.com |
| Holly Alessi | | 860-680-3163 | Whoop24@aol.com |
| Patti Silva | Resident | 860-529-7766 | pattisilva5@gmail.com |
| Ryan O'Hallan | Resident - Hartford ICNOX | 860-951-7694 | ryano@knoxhartford.org |
| Alicea Charamut | CT River Watershed Council | (860) 704-0057 | acharamut@ctriver.org |
| Judith Melchreit | Resident | 860 490.1205 | jmelchreit@gmail.com |
| Helena Reilly | Resident | 860-712-3083 | |
| Barbara Clancy | Resident | 860-721-0707 | bclancy1k@msn.com |
| Jeff Bridges | Town of Wethersfield | 860-721-2801 | Jeff.Bridges@wethersfieldct.gov |
| Alex Peterson | CAA | 860-292-2030 | apeterson@ctairports.org |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| David Gumbart | Nature Conservancy | 203-568-6290 | dgumbart@tnc.org |
| Charmaine Craig | Hartford Tree Commission | 860-830-9261 | treeladycharmaine@gmail.com |
| Heather Dionne | City of Hartford City Forester | 860-372-2674 | dionh001@hartford.gov |
| Shawn John Aforismo | | 860 571-8733 | innkeeper@silasrobbins.com |
| C Bruce | | | |
| Kathy Dolan | | 860 563 4941 | Kathdol1@yahoo.com |
| Tom Baptist | City of Hartford | 860 757 4961 | thomas.baptist@hartford.gov |
| Debra Cohen | Citizen | 860-563-5327 | debracohen51@gmail.com |
| Thomas Skorbak | Webb Citizen | 860 970 7446 | |
| Patricia Toce | Citizen | 860 2146486 | toscepatricia@gmail.com |
| Robert O'Connor | citizen | 860 6140759 | Robert.oconnor8@gmail.com |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

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| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Margaret Downie | Hartford Ave Res. | — | mags.ie@personal euphoria.com |
| Tom Mazzarella | Town Resident | — | tmi.tom@SNET.NET |
| Amy Bello | Resident | | |
| Jane Cavalieri | " " | | otter486@aol.com |
| Diana Reeve | Town Res. | | reeve.diana@gmail. |
| Nicole Ferrari | Town Res. | | nicoleferrarimitchell@gmail.com |
| Don Wells | Town Res | | Ndbbew@aol.com |
| Jack Goulmarin | " " | | JGOULMARIN@SBCGLOBAL.NET |
| Nancy Stab | Town Res | 8609306322 | NanayStab@sbcglobal. |
| Yisenia Martinez | Vecinos Unidos | 860-897-8611 | Yedicmi@gmail.com |
| Armi Montstream | Town Res | 860 529-1384 | rmontstream@sbcglobal.net |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

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| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kristi Salters-Pedneault | Wethersfield resident | 860-882-4414 | Ksalters@gmail.com |
| Anthony Cherolis | Hartford South Green NRZ | 860-204-2704 | acherolis@gmail.com |
| Pam Boardman Simpson | "Boardman Family" | 203 606 7843 | pamboardsimp@hotmail.org |
| Kristen Wands | Wethersfield Resident | 860-707-9633 | kristenwetzel@hotmail.com |
| Billye Logan | Wethersfield on cove | 860 529 8023 | billyeanne.cox.net |
| Tracy Gale | citizen of Hartford | 860.232.9019 | tracytgale@gmail.com |
| Pam + Dan Harrison | Weth. resident | | bitzerp@aol.com |
| Tim Courtney | Hartford Resident/Pilot | 773.490.4253 | Tim@TimCourtney.net |
| Eric Doigle | Weth. Resident | 551-427-8892 | ericdoigle@cox.net |
| Heather & Alex Feliciano | Weth Res | 860 305 9906 | Haf92603@gmail.com |
| Mary Pelletier | Park Watershed 501c3 | | maryp@parkwatershed.org |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

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| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| MARK MITCHELL MD | CT COALITION FOR ENV JUSTICE | 860-794-9497 | MMITCHELL@ENVIRO-MD.COM |
| SARA BRONIN | Hartford | 860-840-1408 | sara.bronin@gmail.com |
| Mark Walsh | Weth. | | Mark.Marsh@Cox.net |
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# PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING SUMMARY

Project: Environmental Assessment (EA) & Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for Obstruction Removal – Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

Location: Wethersfield Town Hall

Meeting: Public Information Meeting #1

Date: January 12, 2017 – 6:30 p.m.

**Summary:**

A public information meeting (PIM) for the Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal – Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD) was held at the Wethersfield Town Hall – Media Center on January 12, 2017 – 6:30 p.m. The meeting presentation outlined the overarching purpose of the EA and EIE, which is to promote safety by bringing the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace as well as the process of identifying and evaluation potential obstructions. The study documents potential impacts of tree obstruction removal, includes trees both on and off the airport, satisfies the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) and is consistent with applicable FAA guidance.

There were approximately 60+ persons in attendance, including the following representatives of the Connecticut Airport Authority and Airport.

| Attendee | Affiliation |
|---|---|
| Colin Goegel | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Molly Parsons | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Alex Peterson | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Bob Bruno | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Barry Pallanck | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Matt Kelly | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Sally Snyder | Connecticut Airport Authority |
| Paul McDonnell | CHA Consulting |
| Stephanie Parsons | CHA Consulting |

The following is a summary of comments and questions discussed during the meeting:

Q1. What is the height and number of the trees that will be removed?
A1. The height and the number of trees are unknown at this time.

Q2. Is this a possible precursor to a runway extension?
A2. There is no runway extension planned for the airport at this time.

Q3. Could the tops of the trees be cut instead of cutting the whole tree down?
A3. This option is not out of the question, however eventually they will need to be cut.

Q4. Are they changing the flight patterns and is this why they are doing this study?
A4. The CAA is not changing flight patterns, this study is required to ensure safety of the aircraft using the airport.

Q5. If you remove the trees, will this project have to be done again in the future?
A5. If the trees grow and create a safety hazard in the future this process will need to be completed again.

Q6. If you remove the trees, will the noise level increase due to the tree removal?
A6. Acoustical studies show that tree removal has little impact on the airport noise levels as the vast majority of off-airport noise is from airborne aircraft flying at height above the trees. The flood control levee would potentially provide a greater barrier for aircraft ground noise then existing trees.

Q7. Will the tree removal allow for more or larger aircraft?
A7. Tree removal will have no impact on design aircraft for the airport. It is unknown if this project will increase the number of aircraft using the airport.

Q8. Will there be a public hearings and if so could they be held in different locations?
A8. Yes, there will be a public hearing which could be held in multiple locations.

Q9. Were bird collisions included within this report?
A9. The EA and EIE was not based on wildlife hazardous reports.

Q10. Why weren't mitigation procedures evaluated within this report?
A10. Mitigation procedures are evaluated during the permitting phase of the project.

Q11. If the Hartford-Brainard Airport is under review and has a potential of closing, why not evaluate the tree removal issue once the decision has been made to close or not to close the airport?
A11. The CAA has no plans to close the airport; tree cutting is necessary to ensure safety of the aircraft using the airport.

Q12. Will removing the trees effect the erosion control of the cove?
A12. It could, however that will be taken into consideration during the permitting phase of the project.

Q13. Was environmental justice taken into consideration during this process?
A13. Yes, none of the trees are on public property, so there are no anticipated environmental justice impacts.

Q14. If you remove the trees, will this increase the odor smell from the treatment plants?
A14. Trees can have a small beneficial impact on odors, however the tree removal locations are east of the odor sources and do not provide a buffer between residential areas and the treatment plants.

In addition to the questions that were answered at the meeting a number of other concerns were raised regarding the project during the meeting. These comments and concerns are summarized below.

Comment 1: Multiple residents concerned about the trees to be removed.

Comment 2: Residents concerned about the mitigation procedures and why were they not addressed within the PowerPoint.

Comment 3: Resident mentioned the 2008 Zoning Regulations were rewritten in 2016.

Comment 4: Residents addressed that they would like more than one Public Hearing Meeting
- (i.e. in East Hartford, Hartford and Glastonbury, CT).

Comment 5: Multiple residents stated that Hartford was not aware of this project nor the Public Information Meeting.
- One resident stated that she learned of the meeting 3 days prior (Monday). Stated they received one letter in June but not anything recently.

Comment 6: Resident (Wethersfield, CT) stated areas within the proposed 40 acre tree removal area should not be left to the discretion of the designer. The public should have a say on what is to be cut, and not the designer.

Comment 7: Residents stated that they would like there to be public river access in order for nearby residents enjoy the area for recreational use.

Comment 8: Many residents vocalized that environmental justice was not taken into consideration during this project.

Comment 9: Residents are concerned about the bald eagles within the area. Many have seen them nesting on the north end of the property and in the vicinity of the proposed trees in question.

Comment 10: Residents addressed that the planes do not follow the correct flight pattern. The planes are supposed to fly over the river and not over the residential community.

Comment 11: Residents worried about environmental effects including but not limited to:
- Noise: Trees act as a noise barrier
- Odor : Trees block the smell from the surrounding treatment plants
- Visual: By removing the trees, the area will lose its aesthetic feel.

Comment 12: Residents concerned, once trees are removed if flight patterns will change.
- Planes will come down earlier and fly down lower
- Bigger planes will come into the airport.

# Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

## Environmental Assessment for Tree Obstruction Removal

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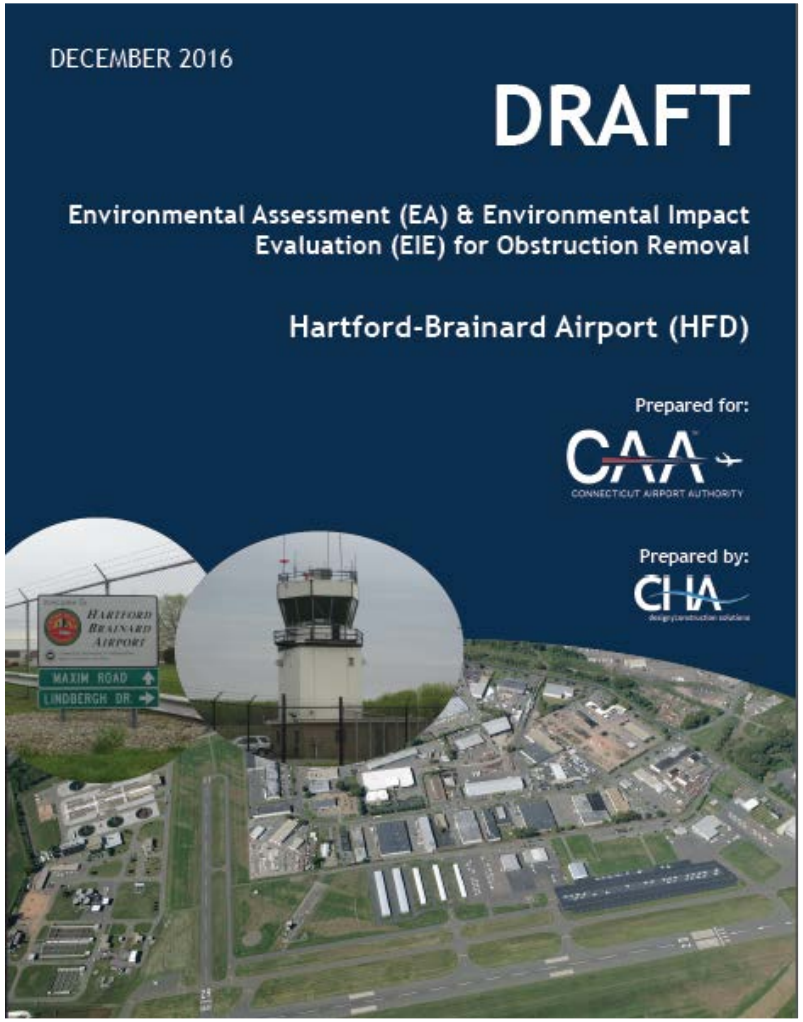
CHA design/construction solutions

# *Draft Environmental Assessment Report for Hartford-Brainard Airport*

*December 2016*

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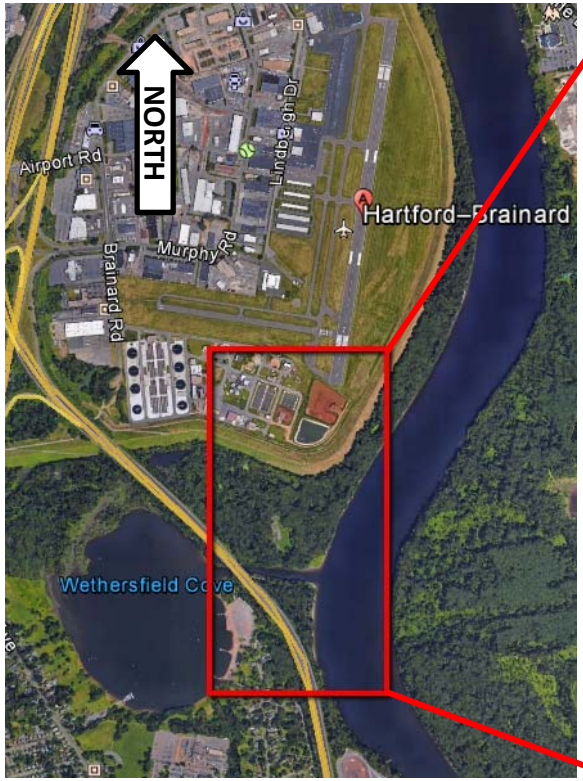
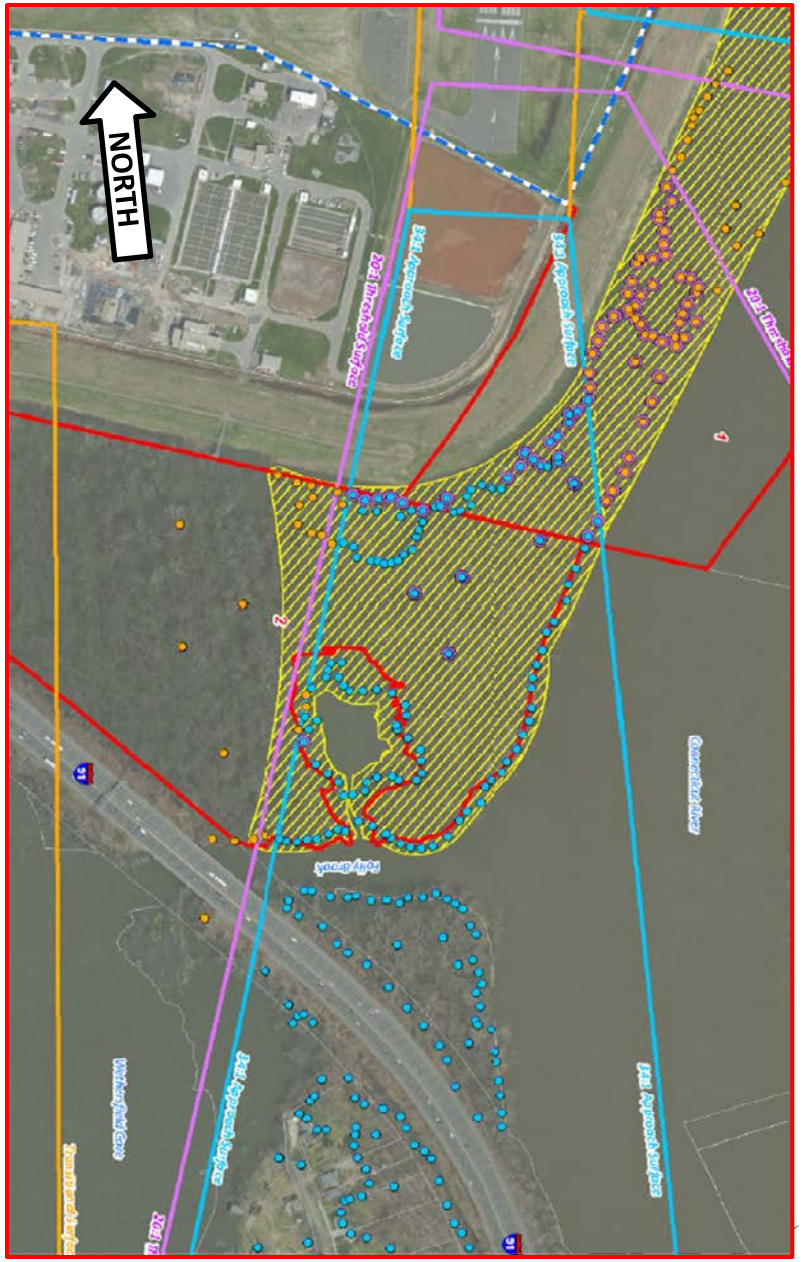
# Project Background

- The Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the potential impacts of tree obstruction removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
- Include trees located on and off airport property
- Study satisfies both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA)
- Consistent with FAA guidance:
  - Order 1050.1F – Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures
  - Order 5050.4B – NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions

# Project Background

- EA includes off-airport obstruction removal

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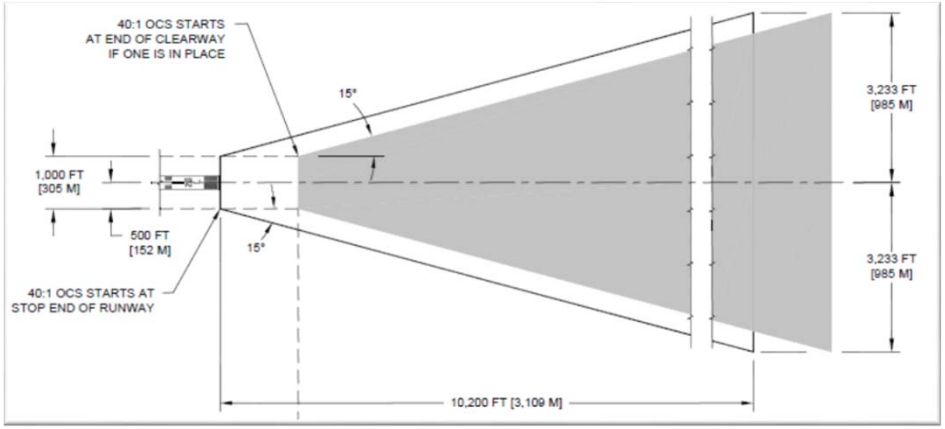
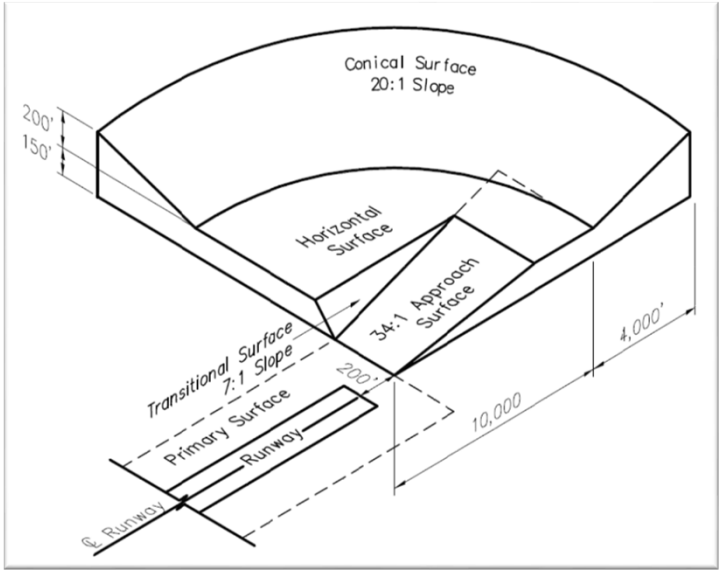
# Project Background

- Objects that penetrate the defined airspace are classified as obstructions, and should be removed to safely accommodate aircraft operations
- The EA addresses tree removal associated with:
  - **Federal (i.e., FAR Part 77) Navigable Airspace**
  - **FAA Design Standards**

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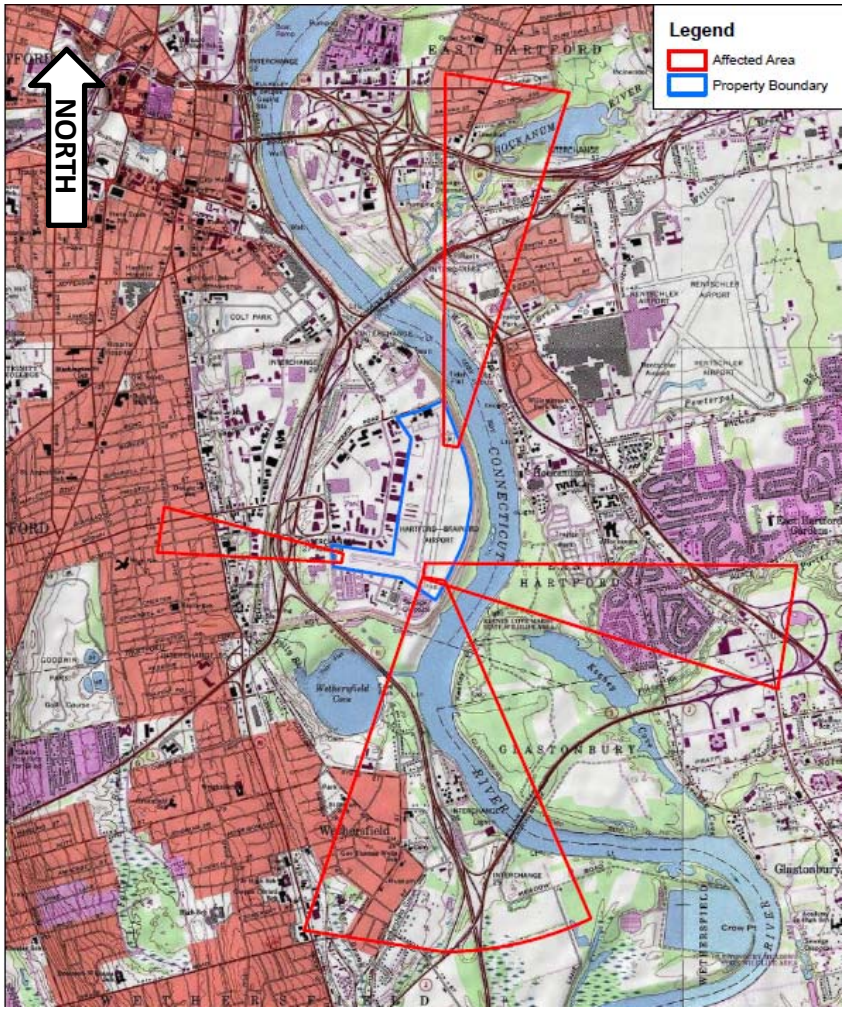
# Project Background




HFD-Brainard Location Map

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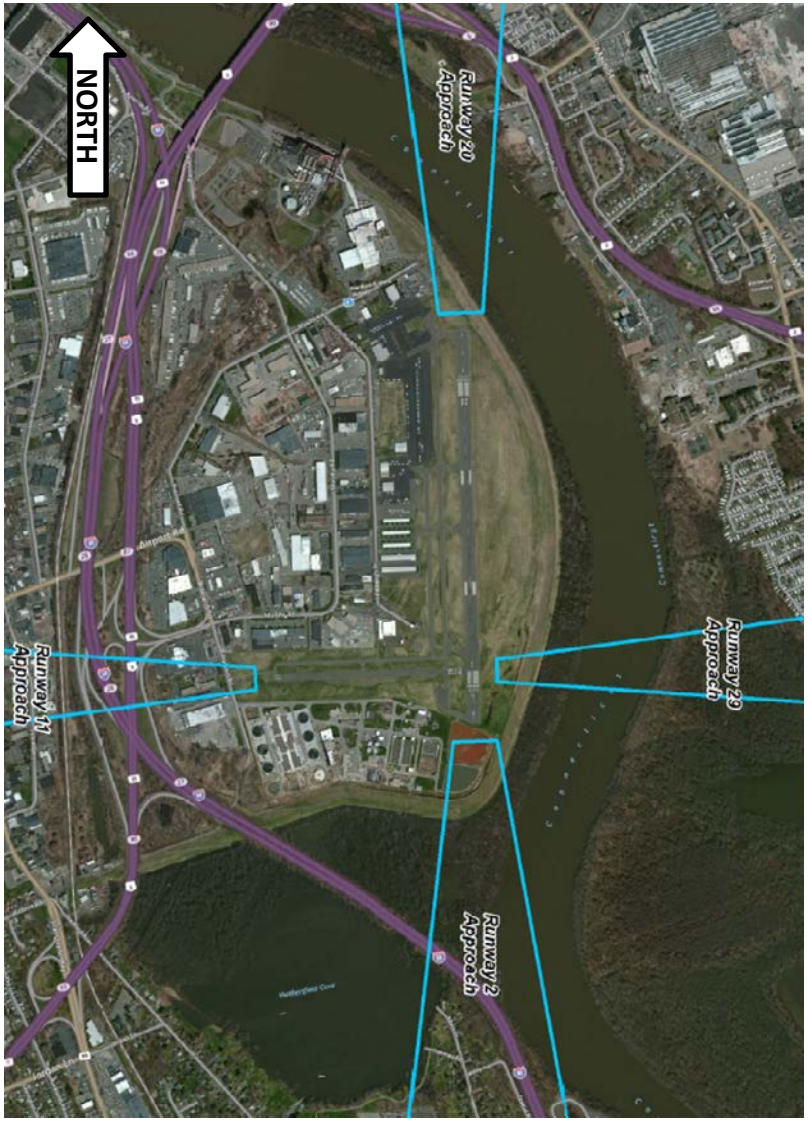
# Project Background

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# Project Background

Airspace Video (1 min.)

# Purpose and Need

- Purpose:
  - Improve airport safety by removing tree obstructions (compliance with FAA design standards).
- Need:
  - FAA has established airspace and design criteria to provide for safe aircraft operations.
  - The 2012 airspace analysis identified existing safety deficiencies.
  - **The Airport is <u>required</u> to address the <u>safety</u> deficiencies to the extent feasible.**

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# Alternatives Analysis and Proposed Action

- No Action Alternative
- Full Obstruction Removal Alternative
- Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative

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# No Action Alternative

| Goal(s): This option minimizes environmental impacts as it takes no action to remove, lower, mark, or mitigate existing or potential future airspace obstructions. | |
|---|---|
| Description: Tree obstructions have been identified beyond both runway ends, Transitional Surface areas, and the outer airspace of the Horizontal and Conical Surfaces. These presumed hazards would remain in place, and potentially increase in size and penetration with additional tree growth. | |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
| • No wetland impacts (temporary or permanent)<br>• No impacts to biological resources, habitats, or species of concern<br>• No impacts to parks or recreation<br>• No impacts or disturbance to property owners<br>• No project costs | • Retains potential hazards to airport users<br>• Retains a potential hazard to people and property on the ground surrounding the airport<br>• Does not comply with FAA design standards or grant assurances<br>• Risks future FAA funding for improvements to the airport |

# Full Obstruction Removal Alternative

| Goal(s): This option removes all penetrations to the FAR Part 77 Approach and Transitional Surfaces, with obstruction lighting for the Horizontal and Conical Surfaces. | |
|---|---|
| Description: A comprehensive removal of obstructions to the inner airspace surfaces, including substantial areas off-airport property. This alternative provides maximum benefit to airport users and safety enhancement. Outer surfaces are protected with lighting during nighttime operations. | |
| **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| • Clears or lights virtually all defined aeronautical surfaces<br>• Satisfies federal design standards and assurances<br>• Comprehensive removal of potential hazards to airport users<br>• Improves safety for people and property on the ground surrounding the airport | • Potential for impacts to wetlands (temporary or permanent)<br>• Potential impacts to biological resources<br>• Substantial coordination and negotiation needed with property owners<br>• The need for numerous avigation easements may prevent successful completion of project and significantly extend the required schedule<br>• High project costs<br>• Successful completion is questionable |

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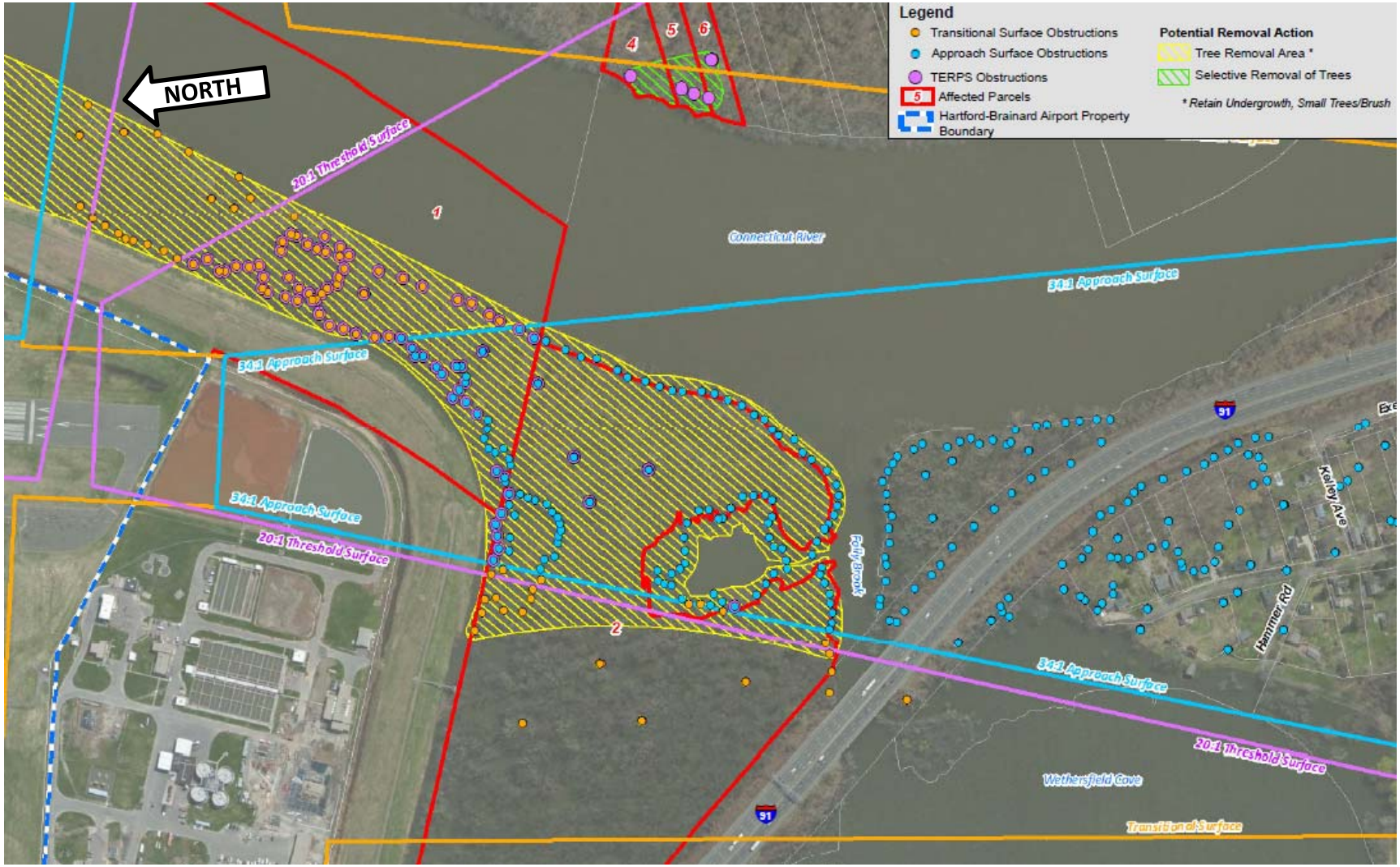
# Full Obstruction Removal Alternative

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# Full Obstruction Removal Alternative

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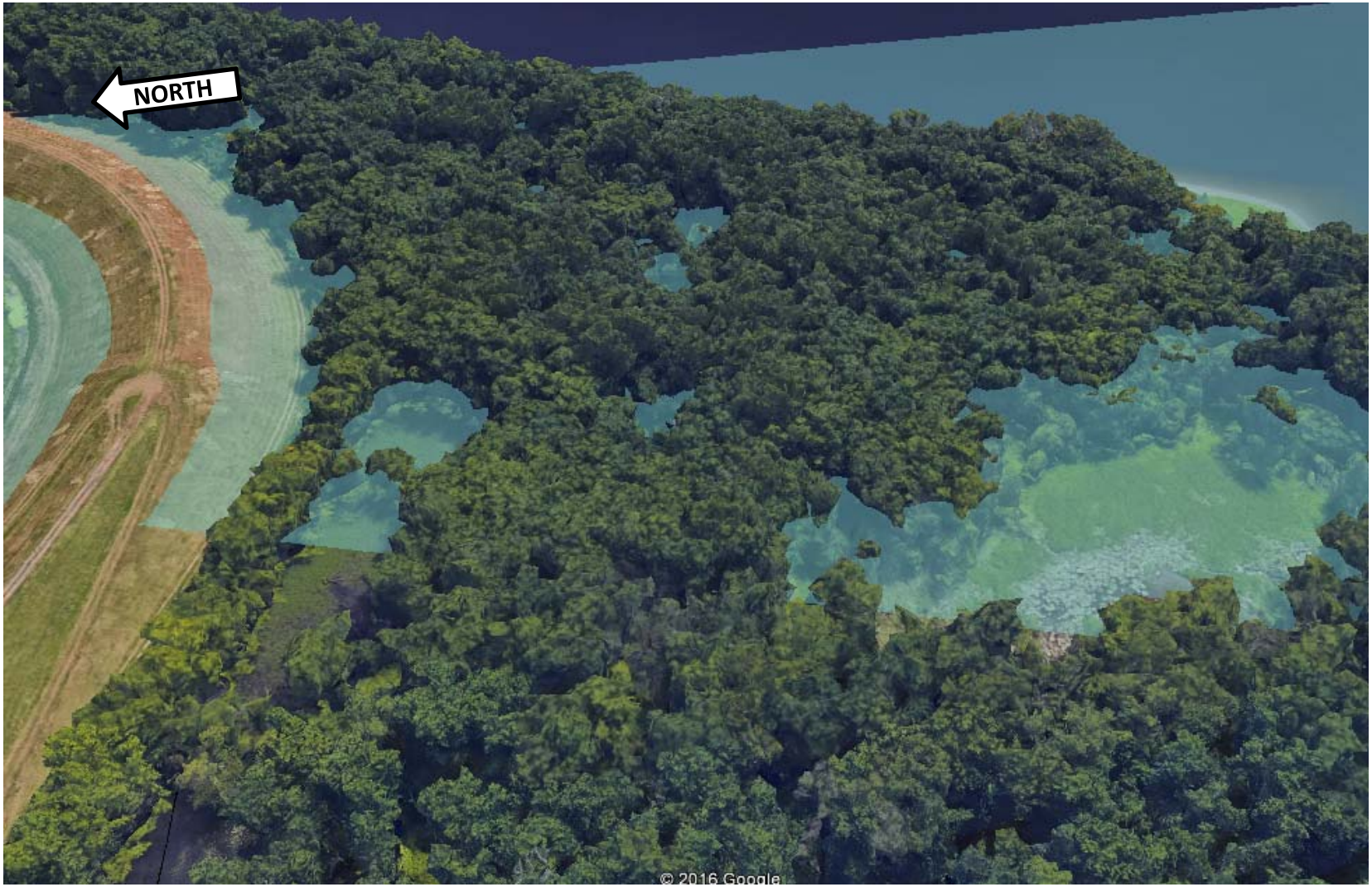
# Full Obstruction Removal Alternative

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# Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative

| Goal(s): This option removes penetrations to the FAA Threshold Surface in off-airport locations (and to FAR Part 77 Approach and Transitional Surfaces on-airport) | |
|---|---|
| Description: A reduced removal alternative intended to clear the critical penetrations to the runway approaches to maintain operational safety, while minimizing the impact to off-airport properties and the natural environment. | |
| **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| • Clears the critical obstructions<br>• Satisfies federal design standards and assurances<br>• Improves safety for people and property on the ground surrounding the airport<br>• Reduces impacts to environmental resources<br>• Reduces the number of affected property owners<br>• Streamlines the project schedule and reduces costs | • Potential impacts to wetland, biological, habitat, or species of concern remain present<br>• Easement are required with property owners<br>• Less critical obstructions will remain<br>• Outer Part 77 surface are not protected with obstruction lighting |

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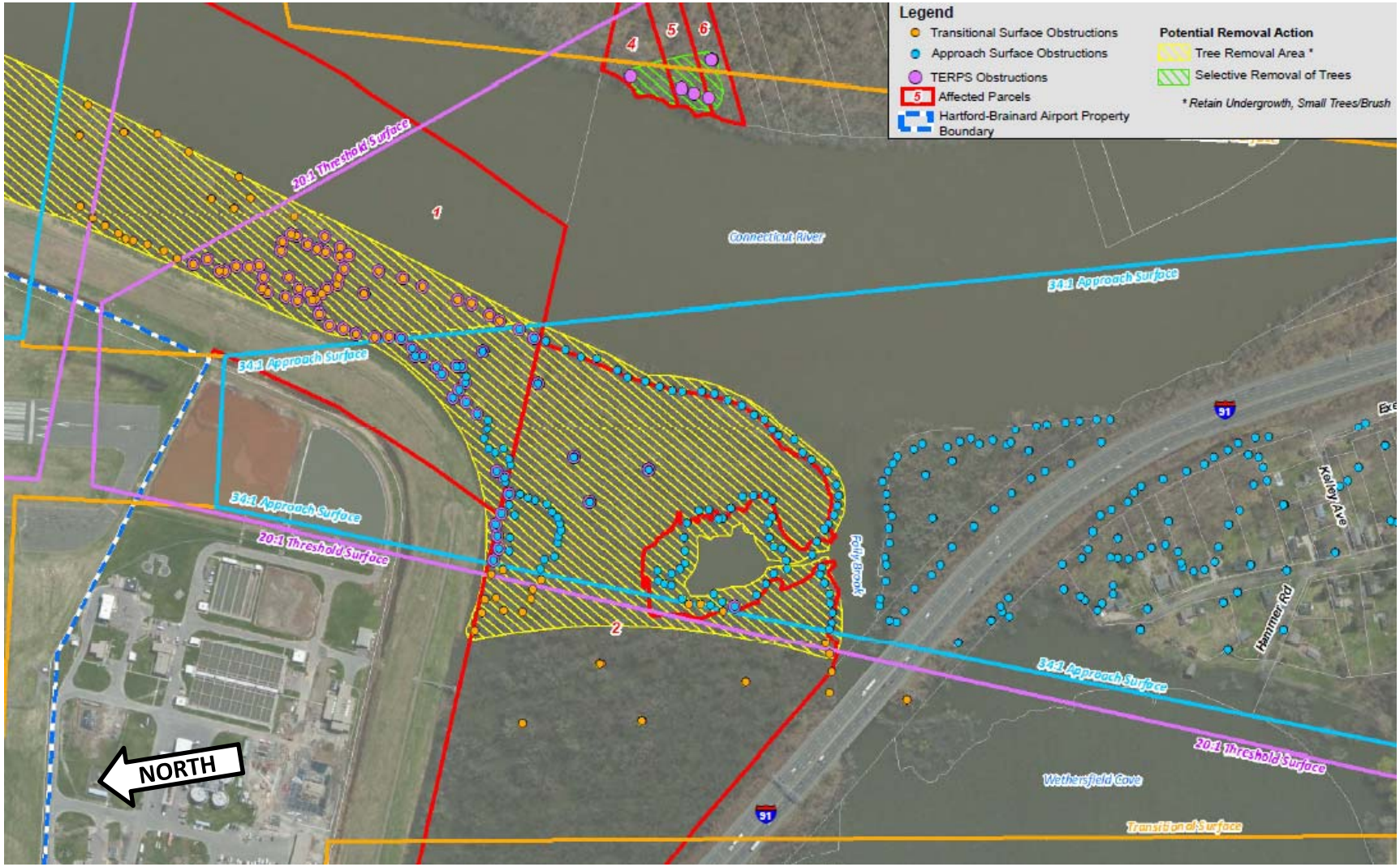
# Runway 2

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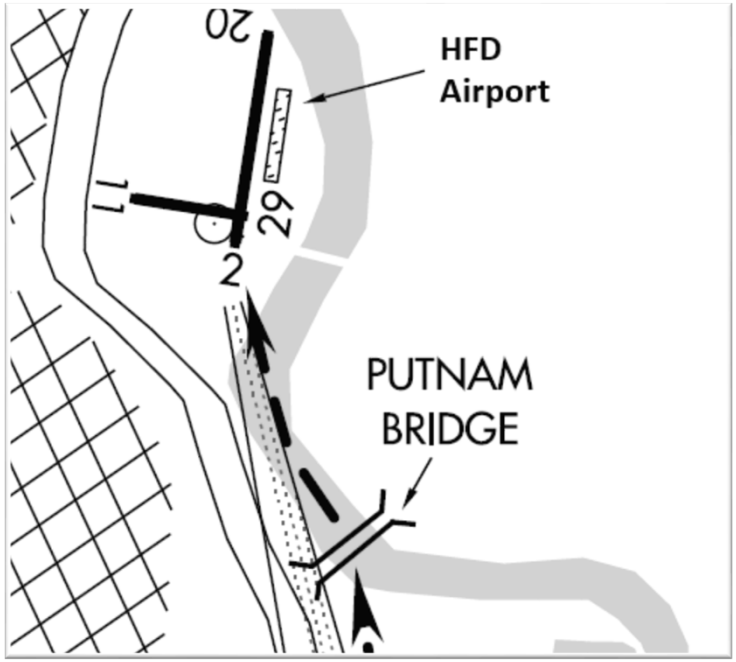
# Runway 2

- Visual Approach Over River (River Visual)
- Instrument Approach Over River (RNAV GPS)



# Runway 2

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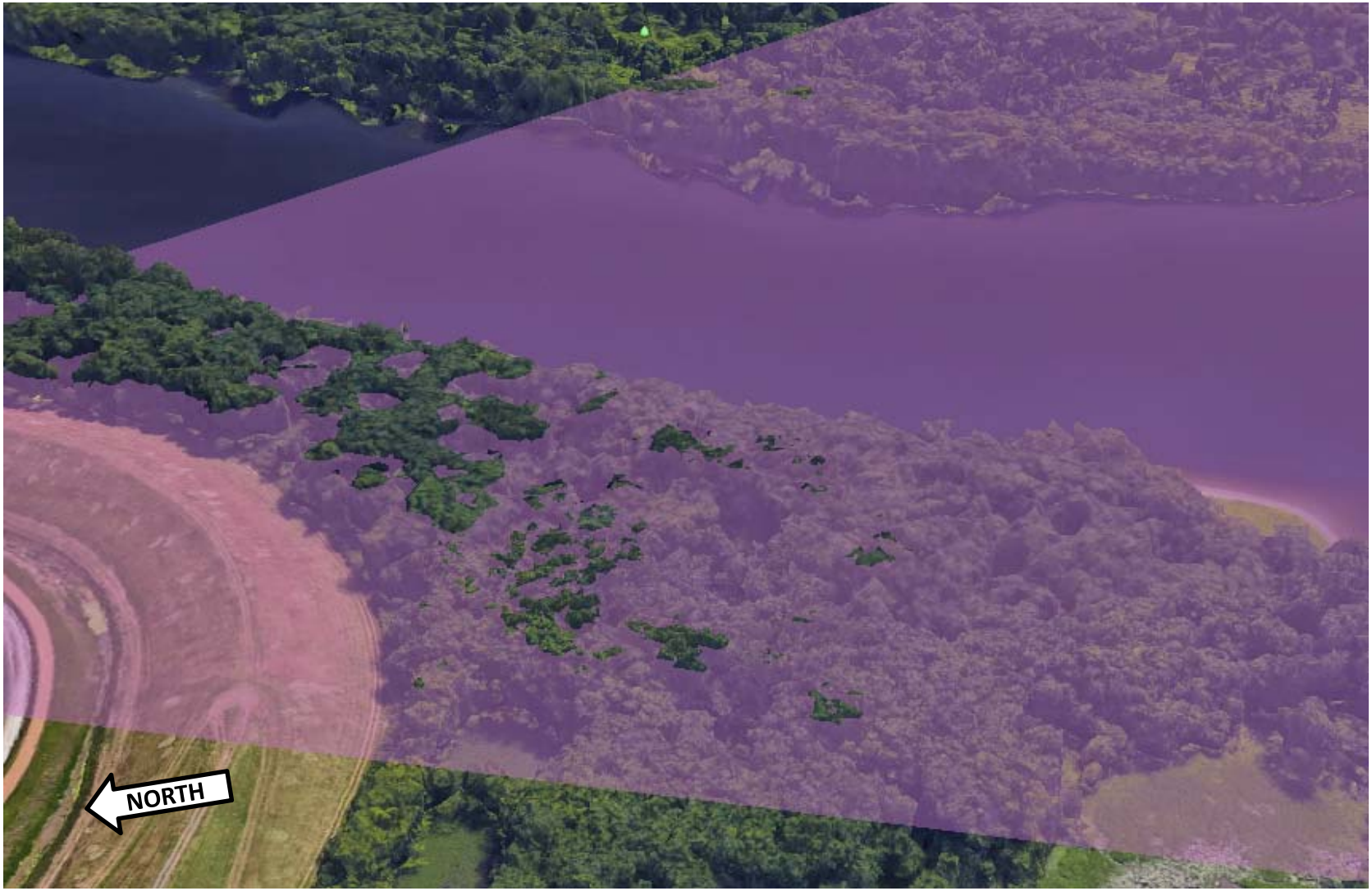


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# Runway 20

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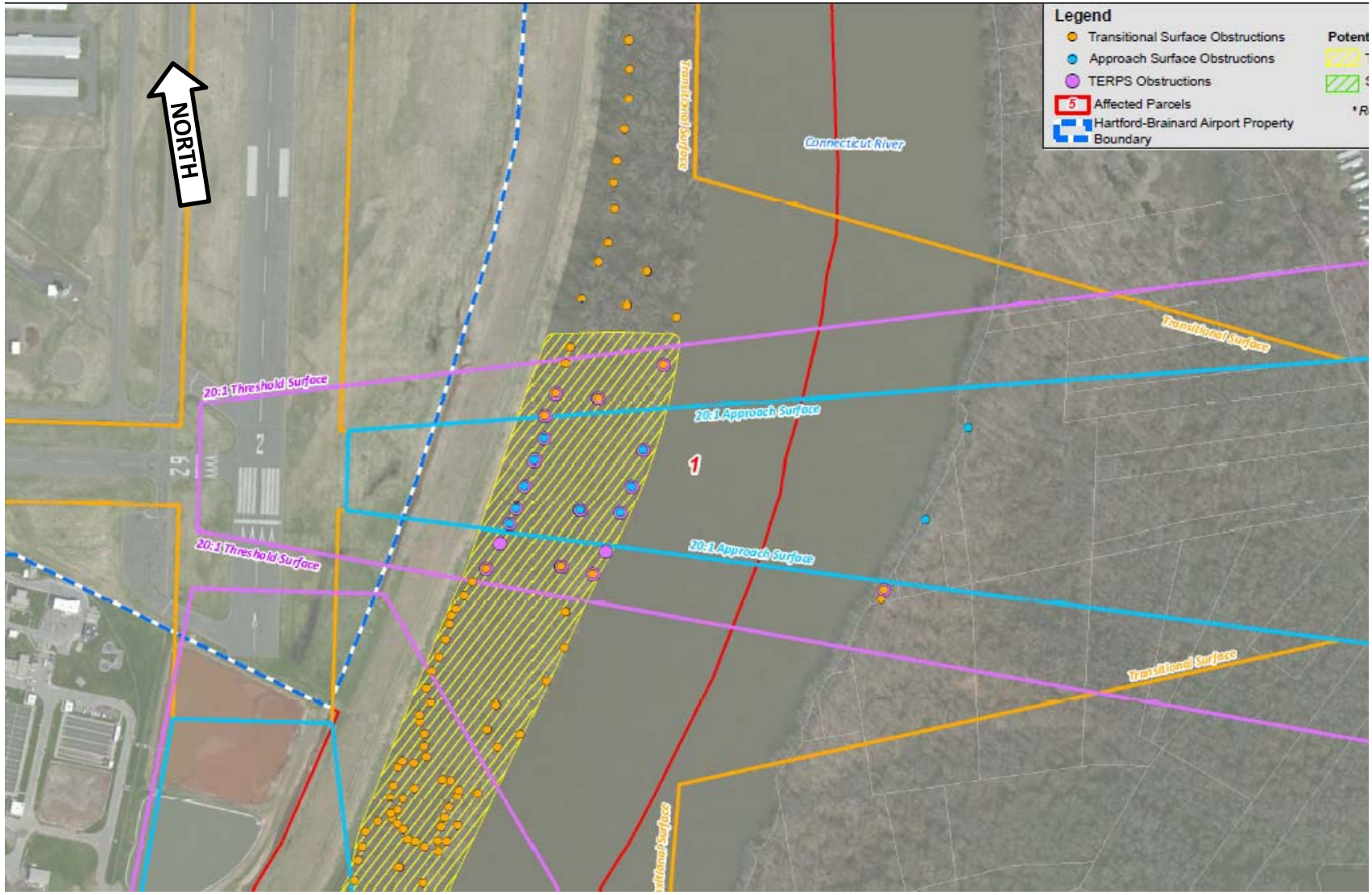
# Runway 20

# Runway 29

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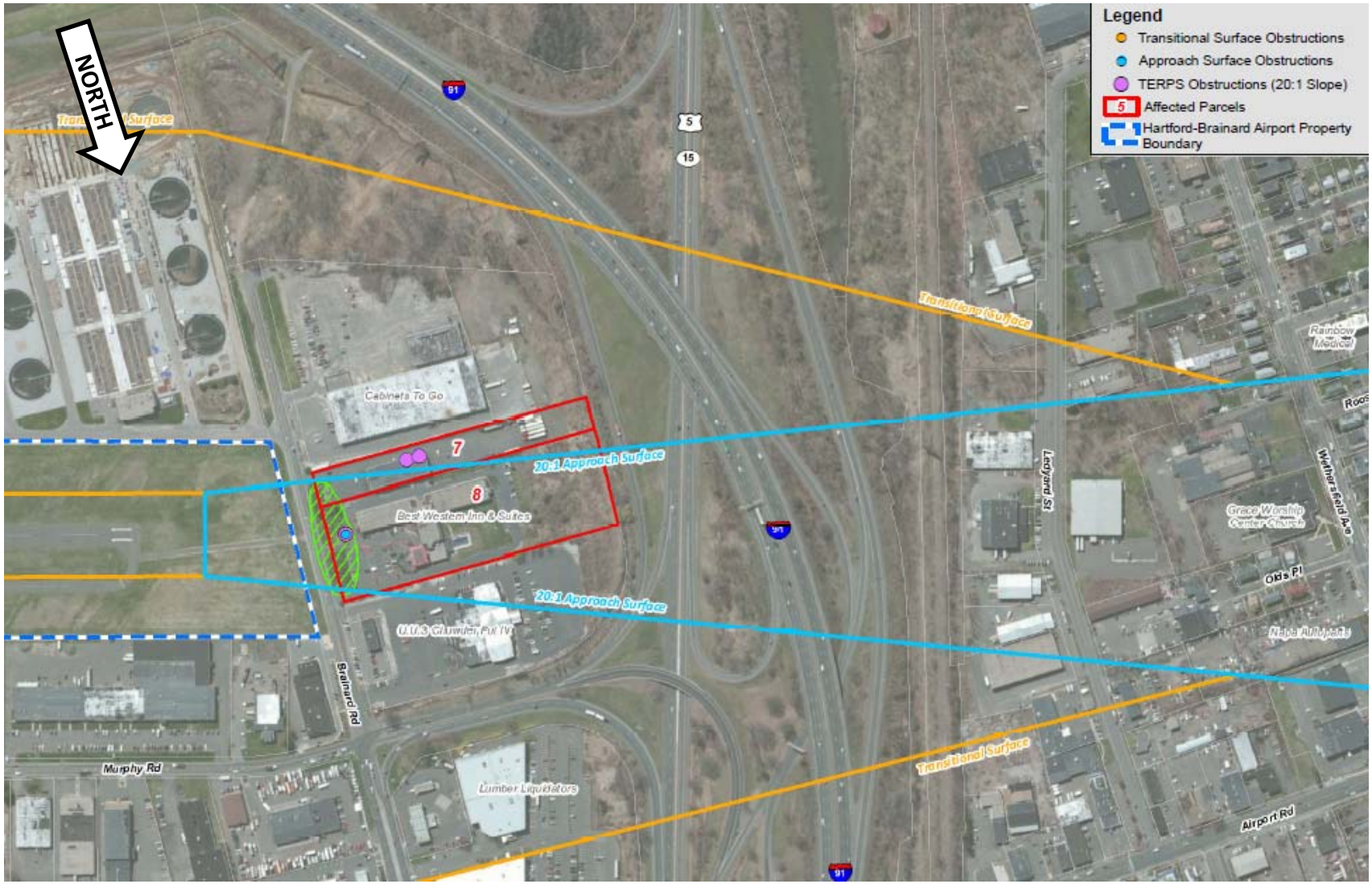
# Runway 11

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# Recommended Alternative
## Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative

- The CAA and FAA have identified this alternative as the most practical solution.
- Balances airport safety with environmental considerations, minimizing cost, and natural area and private property disturbance.
- Technique of tree removal is described as ‘selective thinning’ and tall ‘tree removal’

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# Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

Impact categories addressed:

- Air Quality
- Compatible Land Use
- Construction Impacts
- Parks & Recreational Facilities: Section 4(f)
- Farmland
- Fish, Wildlife, and Plants
- Floodplains
- Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste
- Historical, Archeological & Cultural Resources
- Light Emissions and Visual
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Noise
- Socioeconomic Impacts
- Water Quality
- Wetlands

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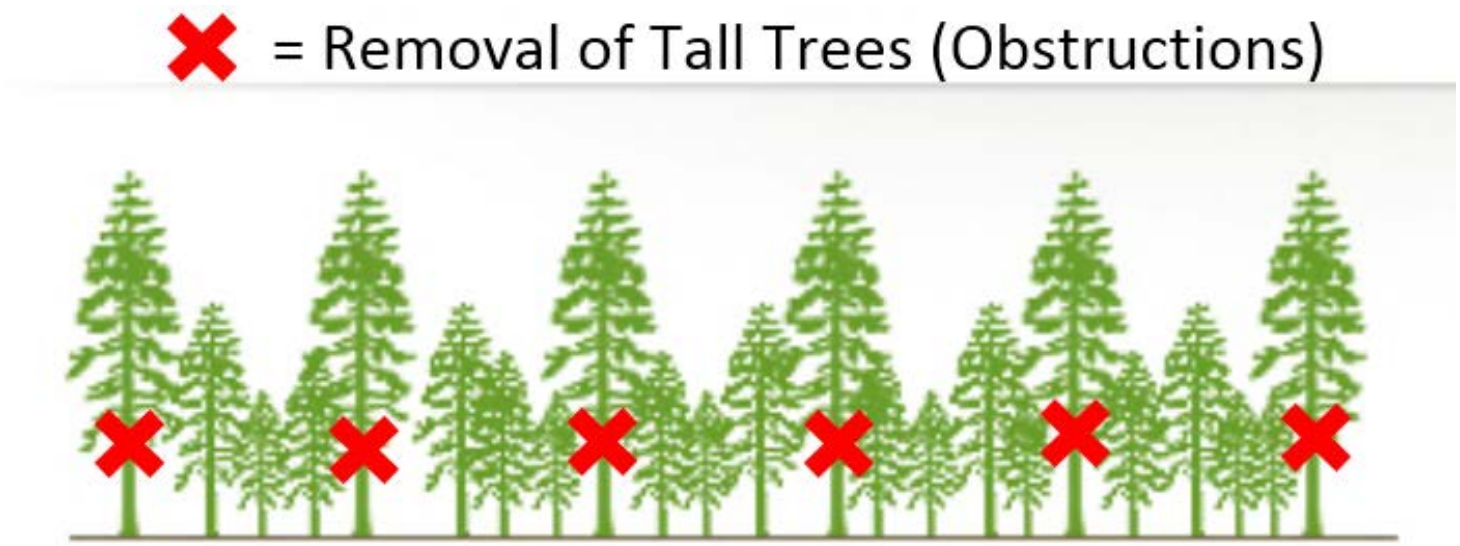
# Selective Thinning

- Selective Thinning includes removal of tall trees, with retention of small trees & brush
- Stumps and roots are retained
- Cut logs & branches can be removed or left in place

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# Selective Thinning Example

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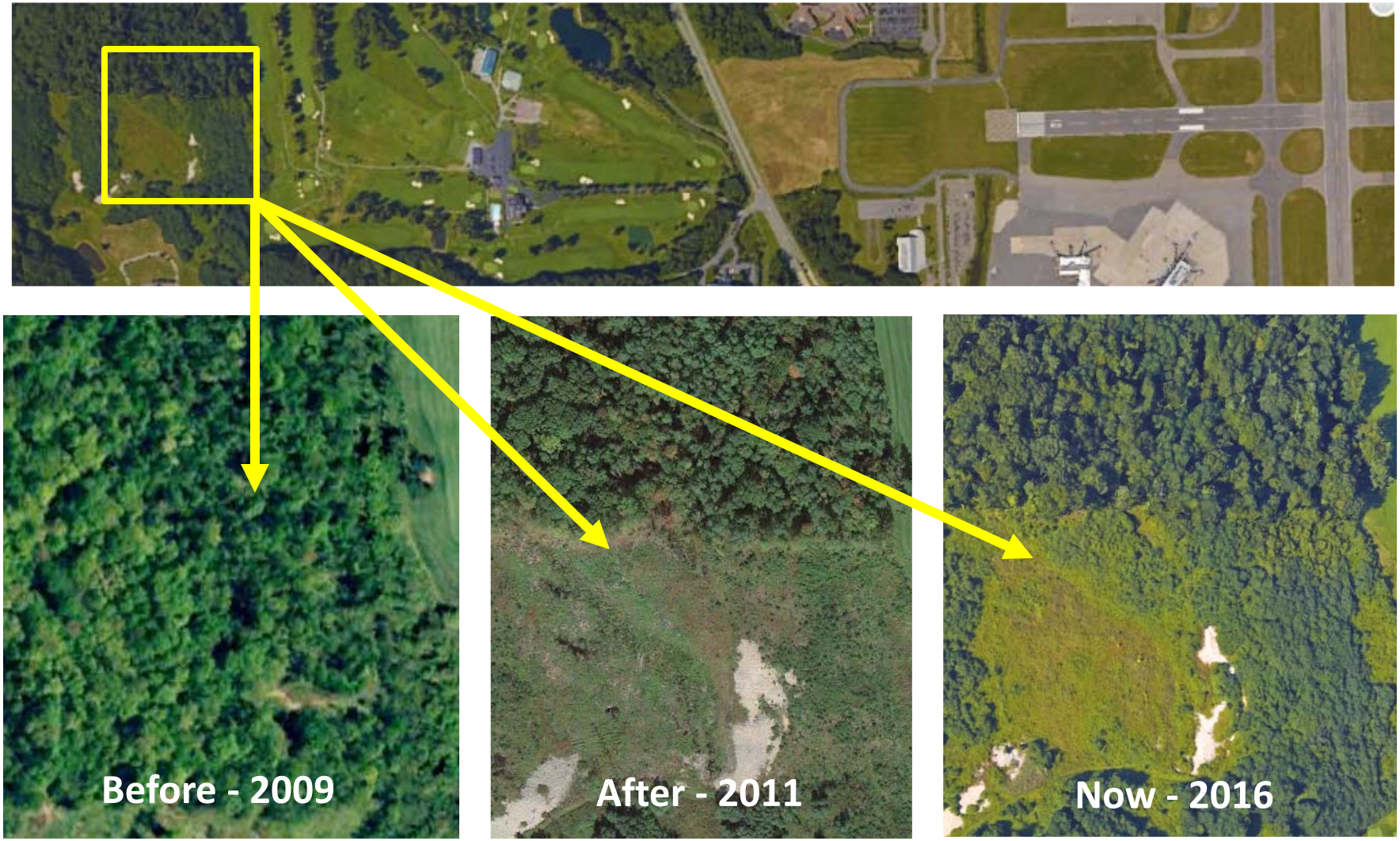
# Off-Airport Tree Removal Example

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# Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

- Key Issues:
  - Section 4(f):
    - Folly Brook Natural Area
    - Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area
  - Threatened & Endangered Species
  - Airport Noise
  - Wetlands

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# Folly Brook Natural Area

- Final approach to Runway 2.
- The removals will not change the purpose, use, or access.
- As small trees and undergrowth would be retained.
- Permits and approvals are required

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# Folly Brook Natural Area

- Existing Tree Removal/Maintenance Plan (1990)
- Intended to Protect the Airspace & Natural Area

TREE MAINTENANCE PLAN

THIS TREE MAINTENANCE PLAN is made and executed on the 22 day of January, 1990, by and between THE CITY OF HARTFORD, a municipal corporation organized and existing within the State of Connecticut, having its principal

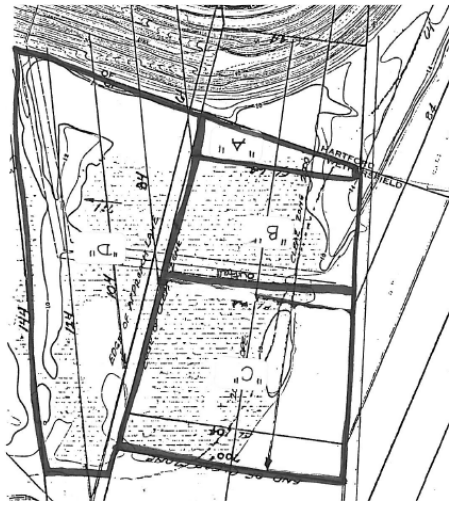
0 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06103, hereinafter

, and THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CONNECTICUT,

nized and existing under the laws of the State

ning an office at 55 High Street, Middletown,

referred to as The Conservancy.



# Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area

- Protect visual and instrument flight operations to Runway 2 (offset procedure over river).
- The removals will not change the purpose, use or access.
- As small trees and undergrowth would be retained.
- Permits and approvals are required

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# Threatened and Endangered Species

- Threatened Species
  - Northern Long-eared Bat
  - Bald Eagle and American Kestrel
  - Wood Thrush and Worm-eating Warbler

*Northern Long-eared Bat*

- Biological Survey may be required
- Seasonal Restrictions on Cutting

*Bald Eagle*

*Worm-eating Warbler*

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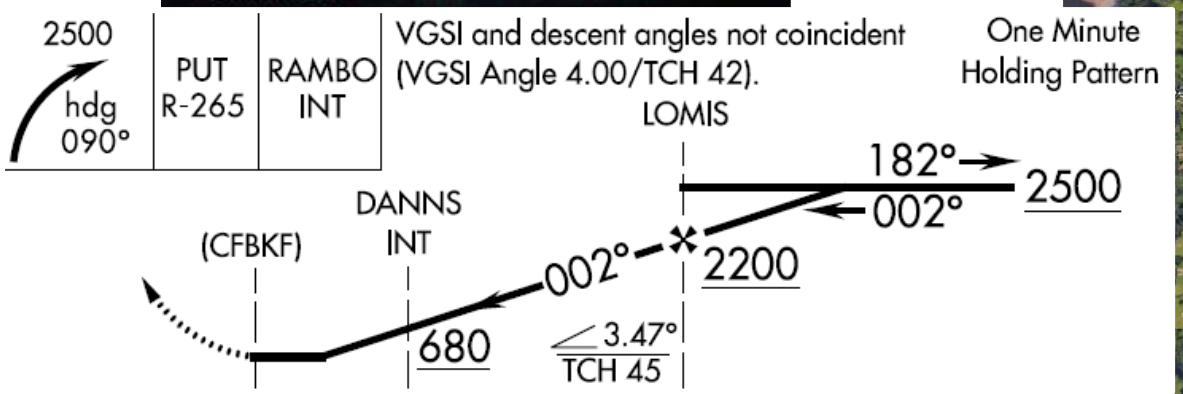
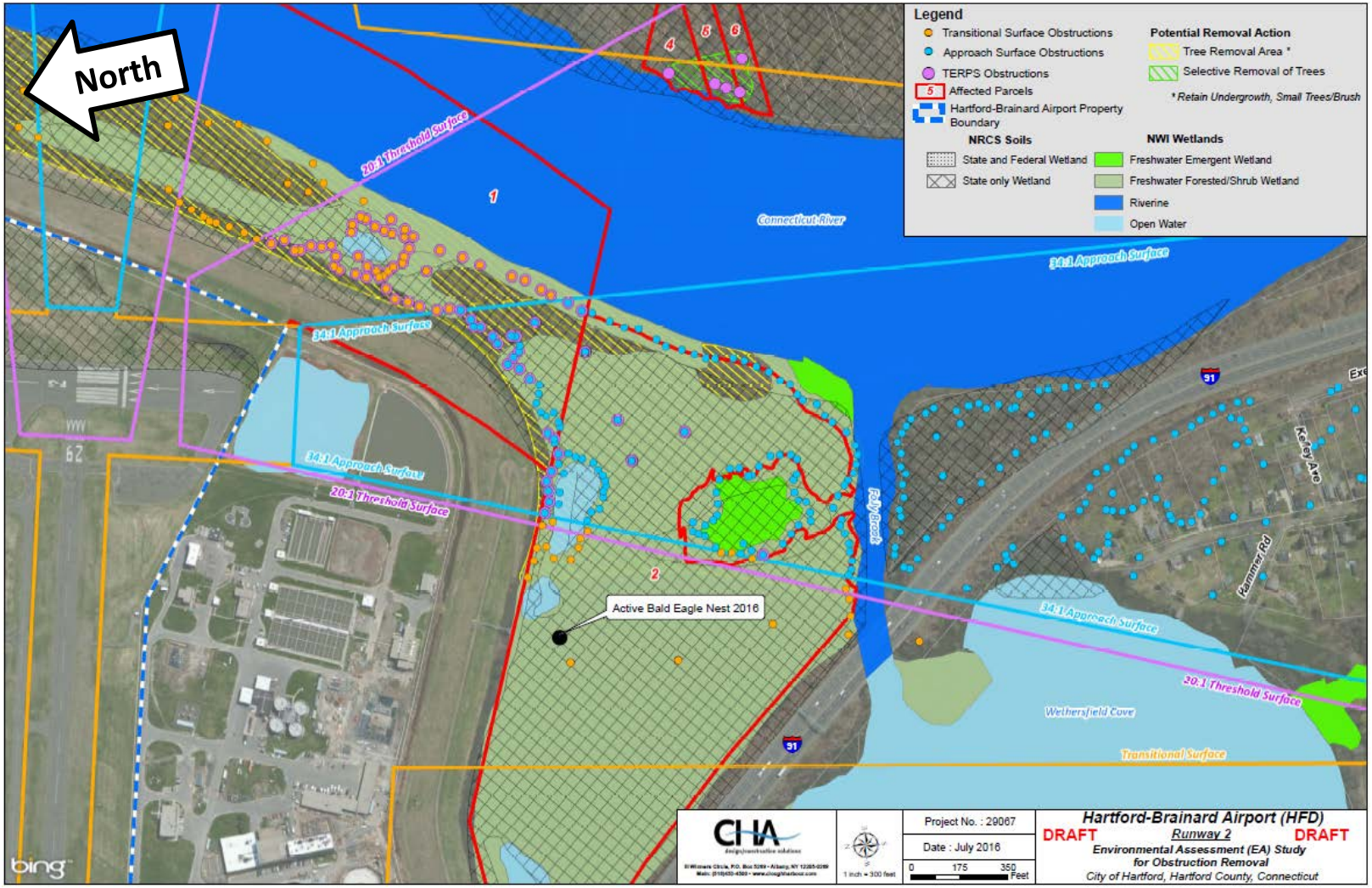
# Airport Noise

- Tree Removals do not Alter flight paths
- Clearing does not Effect Airborne Noise



# Wetlands-Runway 2

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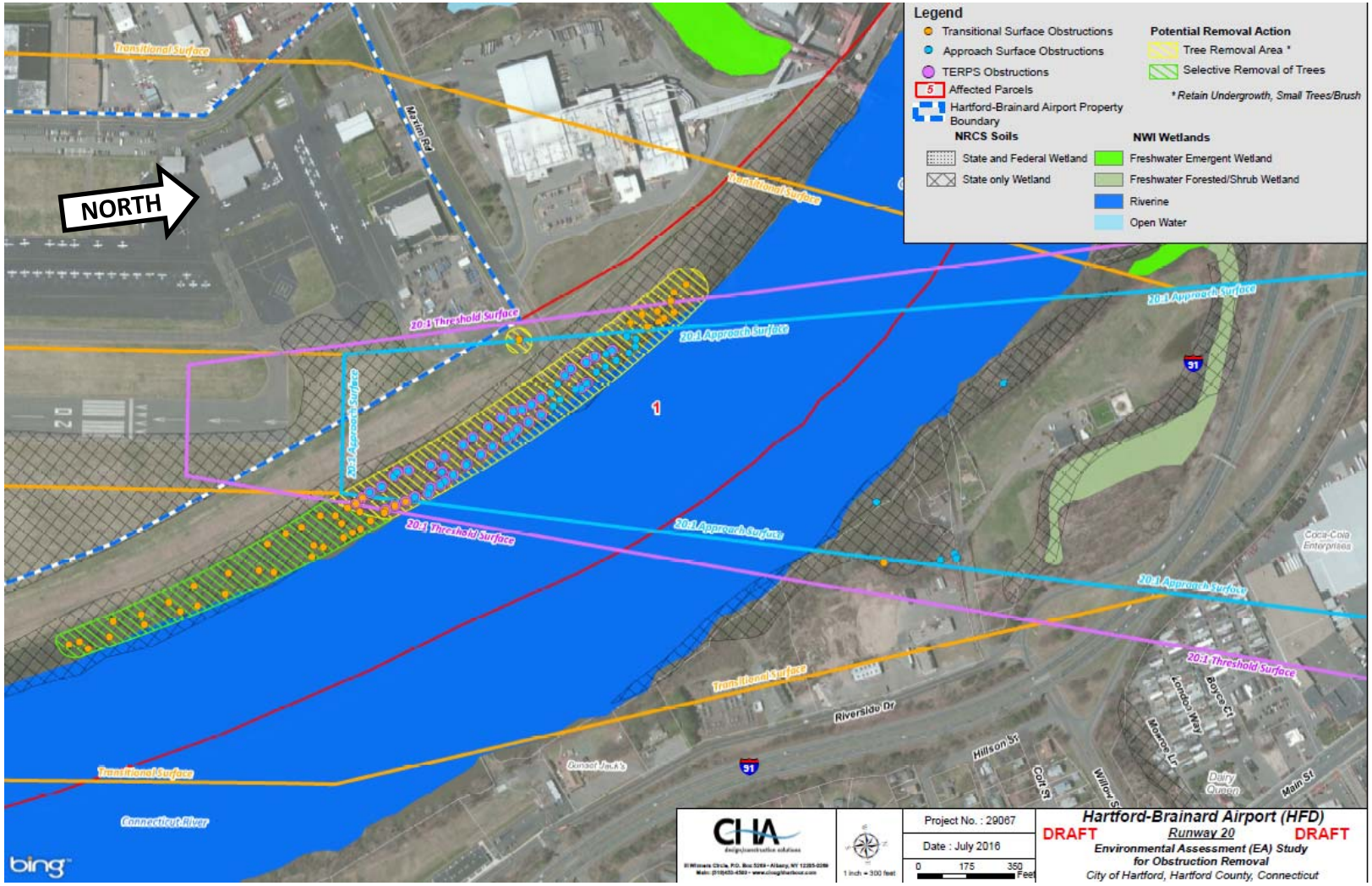
# Wetlands-Runway 20

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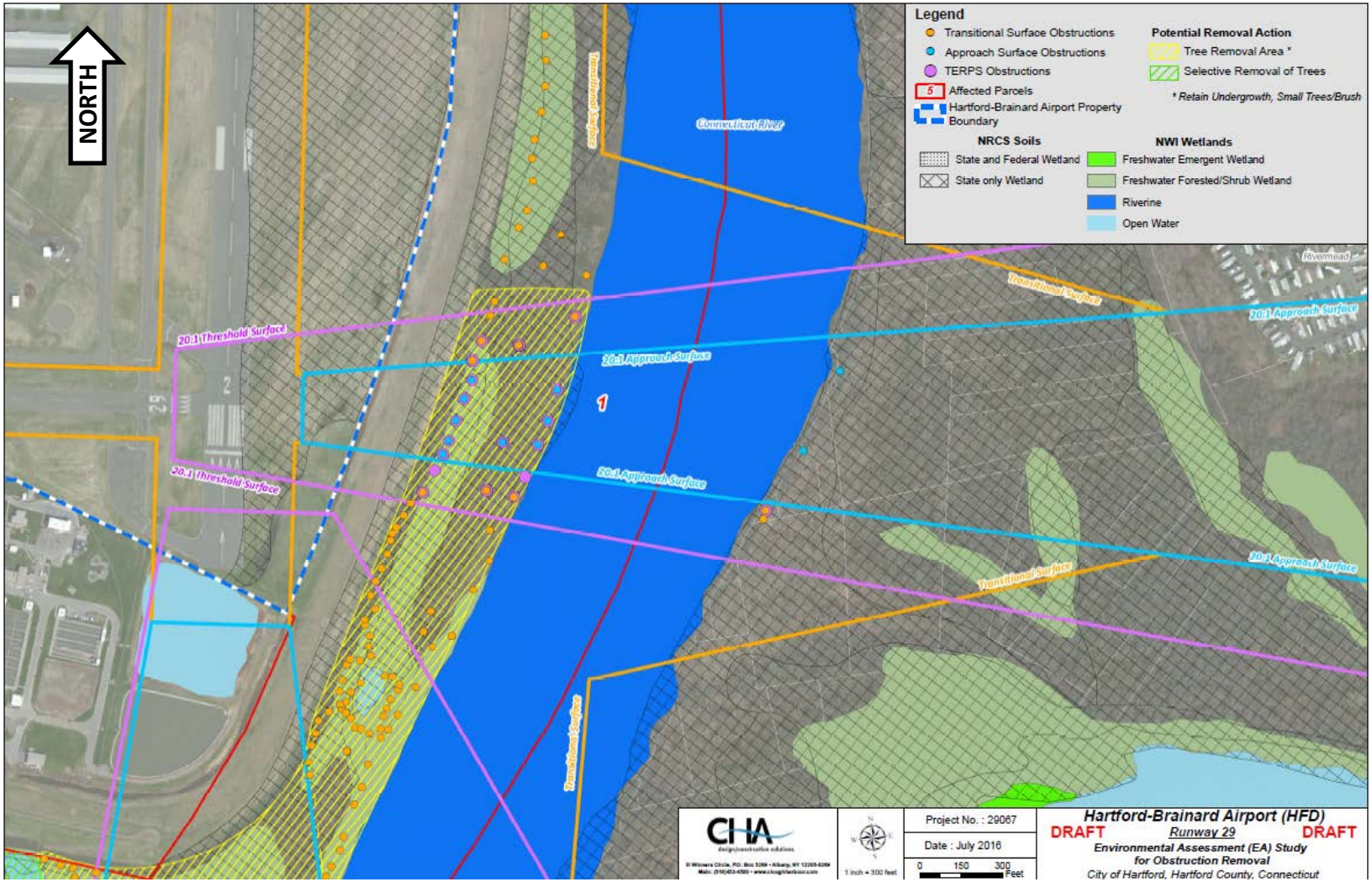
# Wetlands-Runway 29

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# Project Outcome & Next Steps

- Collect & Review Documents
- Prepare Final EA
- Federal Environmental Assessment, under NEPA
  - Lead Agency: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
  - Action: Publish a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- State Environmental Impact Assessment, under CEPA
  - Lead Agency: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
  - Action: Publish a Record of Decision (ROD)
- Next Steps:
  - Design & permitting of tree removals
  - Acquisition of easements or approvals from affected property owners
  - Tree removals

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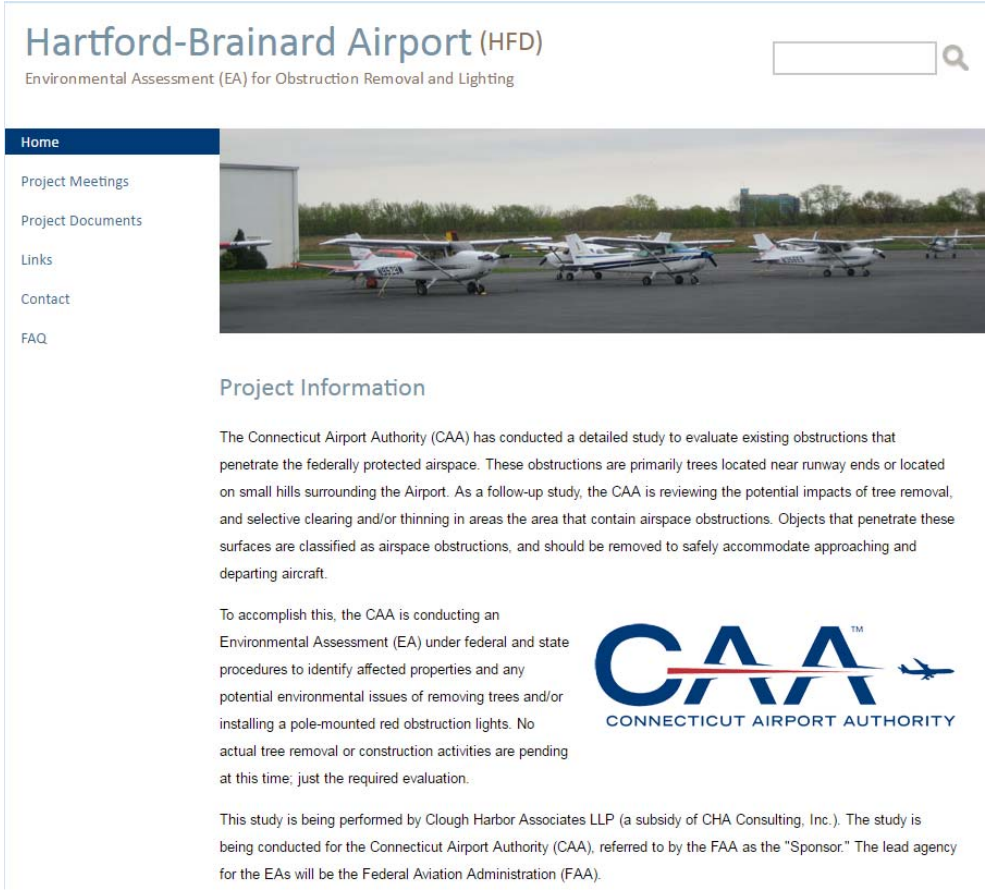
# Study Information

*Please visit the project website at:*



Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

Environmental Assessment (EA) for Obstruction Removal and Lighting

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Project Meetings

Project Documents

Links

Contact

FAQ

## Project Information

The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) has conducted a detailed study to evaluate existing obstructions that penetrate the federally protected airspace. These obstructions are primarily trees located near runway ends or located on small hills surrounding the Airport. As a follow-up study, the CAA is reviewing the potential impacts of tree removal, and selective clearing and/or thinning in areas the area that contain airspace obstructions. Objects that penetrate these surfaces are classified as airspace obstructions, and should be removed to safely accommodate approaching and departing aircraft.

To accomplish this, the CAA is conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) under federal and state procedures to identify affected properties and any potential environmental issues of removing trees and/or installing a pole-mounted red obstruction lights. No actual tree removal or construction activities are pending at this time; just the required evaluation.

This study is being performed by Clough Harbor Associates LLP (a subsidy of CHA Consulting, Inc.). The study is being conducted for the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), referred to by the FAA as the "Sponsor." The lead agency for the EAs will be the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/

# Study Information

***Project EIE Notice posted on CEQ Environmental Monitor Online Portal – December 20, 2016***

***Please provide comments by February 10***

http://www.ct.gov/ceq/site/default.asp

**ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR**

The official site for project information under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act

**December 20, 2016**

**EIE Notices**

The following Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) notice is submitted for review and comment in this edition.

**1. Notice of EIE for the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) – Off-Airport Tree Obstruction Removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport**

**Municipality where project is proposed:** The Airport is located in the City of Hartford approximately 2 miles southeast of Downtown Hartford, CT.

**Address of Possible Project Location:** The airport office is located at 251 Maxim Road, just east of Interstate 91 and west of the Connecticut River.

**Project Description:** Preparation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) environmental document as required to evaluate the potential impacts associated with tree obstruction removal in areas on, as well as north, south, east and west of the Hartford-Brainard Airport. The evaluation addresses obstruction removals associated with Federally-defined airspace surfaces

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Questions and Comments?

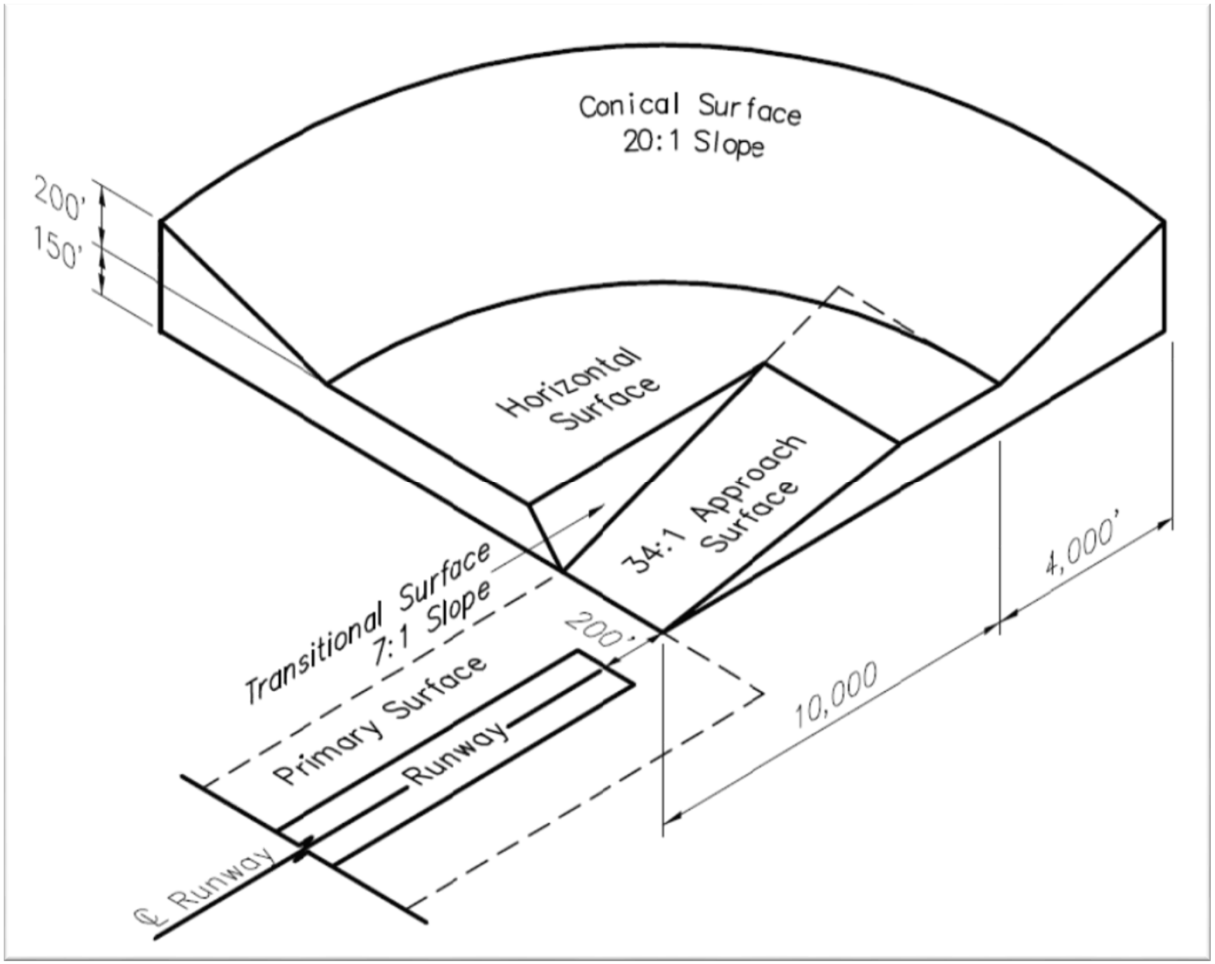
Please provide comments by February 10 to:

Colin Goegel
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT  06096

CGoegel@ctairports.org
http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/

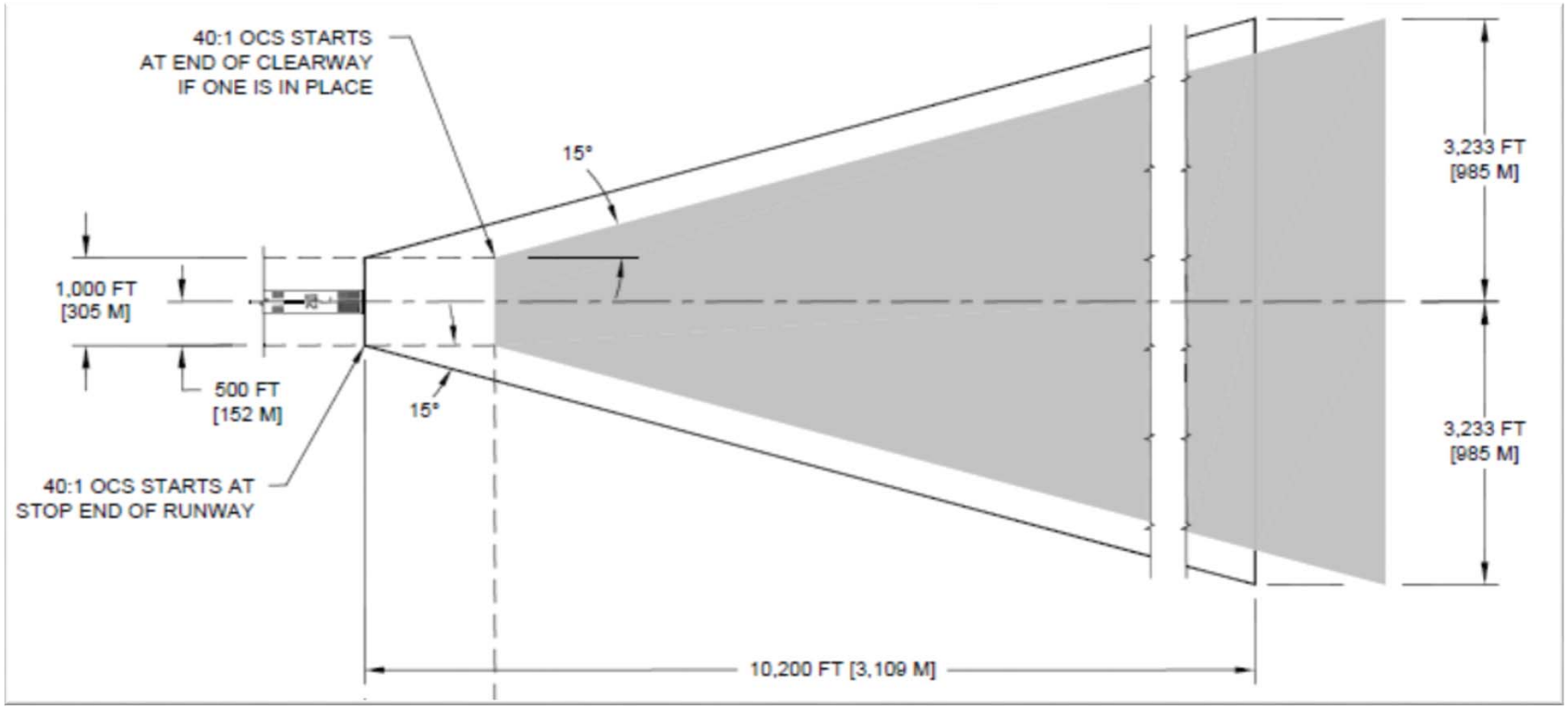
# Federal (FAR Part 77) Navigable Airspace

- Imaginary Surfaces surrounding the Airport, for Obstruction Identification



# FAA Airport Design Standards

- Threshold (Approach) Surface, per Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A




CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing
Notice of Public Hearings

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) will be holding three (3) Public Hearings for the Hartford-Brainard Airport Federal Environmental Assessment (EA) and State Environmental Impact Assessment (EIE) for Tree Clearing. At these meetings, information on the overall project and the study's findings, including the Preferred Alternative, will be presented. The doors for all meetings will open at 6:30PM with the hearing beginning at 7:00PM. The meeting will be held at the following locations on the following dates:

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Information regarding the Environmental Assessment for Tree Clearing is currently available at http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/.

The Glastonbury Citizen/Rivereast News Bulletin
PO Box 373 • Glastonbury, CT 06033 • (860) 633-4691 • FAX (860) 657-3258
www.glcitizen.com • email: citizen@snet.net

# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared James Hallas, who being by me duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the Publisher of the Glastonbury Citizen (name of newspaper); that said newspaper is a newspaper of general circulation in Hartford County, Connecticut; and that the attached notice(s) was published in said newspaper on the following date(s): 3/30/2017, 4/6/2017, 4/13/2017.

Jim Hallas
Newspaper Representative's Signature

STATE OF CONNECTICUT SS

County of Hartford
Sworn and subscribed before me this 17th day of May 2017
by

Sandra H. Murray
SANDRA H. MURRAY, Notary Public
My Commission Expires July 31, 2017

## Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing Notice of Public Hearings

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3TC 3/30, 4/6, 4/13

# EMPLOYMENT

**CAR WASH ATTENDANT NEEDED.** Diamond Sparkle Car Wash, Colchester. Call 860-608-6449

**ELECTRICAL APPRENTICE NEEDED.** experience preferred but if you have schooling will train the right person. Must be clean cut with good driving record. Please call Shawn at 860-759-6652

**LANDSCAPERS NEEDED** - Full time and part time. Experience preferred. Mowing, mulching. 860-906-7916 Mauro

**EXPERIENCED MOWING CREW LEADER** - Knowledge of truck and trailers, clean driving & criminal records. Pay starts @ $15/hr. Call to set up interview. 860-467-3107

The Town of Glastonbury is accepting applications for the following position:

**Senior Construction Inspector – Full Time**
**Hours: 40 per week**
**Starting Salary Range: $28.36 - $30.40 per hour**
**Closing date: 4:00 pm on 4/24/2017**

Under broad supervision of the Assistant Town Engineer, Incumbent is responsible for inspection of municipal public works construction in order to assure work is done according to codes, plans, and specifications. Work is performed primarily in roadways, at construction sites, near construction equipment, in or near excavations and in all weather conditions. Incumbent is responsible for making difficult technical construction inspection decisions.

Inspects various public improvements. Witnesses various acceptance tests. Inspects and evaluates Town infrastructure and assist in prioritization of repairs. Reviews proposed public works and private contractor plans, specifications, and shop drawings for accuracy and appropriateness. Prepares detailed daily reports and maintains records.

**SEEKING ALL AROUND CARETAKER** to mow and maintain 4-acre property in Glastonbury, 3-4/days per week. Must be mechanically inclined and able to change oil and maintain equipment already on site. Call Ed 860-633-5811 for details.

**BOOKKEEPER/ OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR** - Part time position available: 20 to 24 hours weekly. Strong computer skills enabling the learning and maintenance of a proprietary "membership Data Base" software system. Strong accounting skills with working knowledge of QuickBooks Pro software, including payroll module. Working knowledge of Microsoft Excel, Outlook and Word software. Position requires telephone and personal interaction with clients, members, donors and auditors. Send resume to: P.O. Box 419 Glastonbury, CT 06033

**CHAIR RENTAL AVAILABLE AT HAIR TRENDS SALON** - Call Sue 860-301-5266

**THE KIDS CLUB CHILD CARE CENTER** in Marlborough is looking to immediately fill 2 part time positions. One is M-F 7:30-2:30 working in our expanding under 3 program. The other is M-F 2:30/3-5:30 in our preschool and after school care position. The person must be dependable, reliable flexible and have experience working with children of all ages. For more information please contact the center at 860-295-0498.

## POSITION WANTED

**POSITION WANTED - EXPERIENCED HOME CARE PROFESSIONAL,** CNA, cooks, and cleans, great references. Please call HOPE at 860-633-1751, please leave a message.

ALPOA ACCEPTING

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PETS

**FOUND: MULTICOLORED CAT (BLACK, BROWN, WHITE) ON DOUGLAS RD, GLASTONBURY. LONG HAIRED, VERY YOUNG. CALL 860-657-2603.**

## MUSIC

**PIANO TUNING & REPAIR:** Bruce MacLeod, Registered Piano Technician, P.T.G. Keeping Glastonbury in tune since 1980. 346-8193.

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*The Glastonbury Citizen* and *The Rivereast News Bulletin* will make every effort to see that all advertising copy is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no liability or financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising, but will reprint, without charge, that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur, provided that a claim is made within 5 days of publication. The liability of the publisher on account of errors in or omissions from any advertisement will in no way exceed the amount of the charge for the space occupied by the item in error, and then only for the first incorrect insertion. Also, the publisher takes no responsibility for statements or claims made in any advertisement, and will upon request, reveal the name and address of the person or persons responsible for placing any display advertisement, political or otherwise, except for "blind" box ads. The Glastonbury Citizen Inc. reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems unsuitable for its publications. Every effort will be made to verify the legitimacy and propriety of all ads for the protection of our readers. *The Citizen* will take requests for specific placement of ads and will try to accommodate everyone's requests. *The Citizen* cannot guarantee specific placement.

# REAL ESTATE

## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

**4 SALE BY OWNER - Condo in Colchester,** adult community 55 and older. Call 860-460-5554 for info and appt.

## RENTALS

**OAKWOOD DRIVE GLASTONBURY -WAREHOUSE SPACE 2,570 SQ. FT. AVAILABLE.** Space includes 14' garage door, loading dock and office area. Handicapped bathroom included. Contact George at 860 633-3353 for more information.

**COLCHESTER: SPACIOUS 4 BEDROOM,** 2 bath home, easy highway access. Wood/tile floors, fireplace, whirlpool, closets galore. $1800 monthly, 2 months security. Pets extra. Lily 860-537-1176.

**BRAND NEW SIDE-BY-SIDE 4 BEDROOM DUPLEX IN MANCHESTER.** 1800SF of living space, granite/stainless appliances, off street parking, porch, deck and more. Lots of privacy. $1925./month. Call Tom to view. 860-836-2280

**GLASTONBURY COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE,** New London Tpke. Approximately 700 SF. Great parking, direct access to outside, share gas & electric. $1200 /

**3 BEDROOM APTS.** Colchester. www.parkplacecolchester.com

**GLASTONBURY KREIGER LANE 1300 SF FLEX SPACE.** Reception area and two offices, 80% office, 20% storage. C/A, overhead door. Available January 1. 860-633-5469

**OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT IN A PROFESSIONAL HEBRON COMPLEX.** Snow removal, heat/air and all utilities included. Light and bright new neutral paint and carpet. Great parking. Lease term negotiable. $675/month. Call 860-558-3861

**HEBRON 1 BDRM APT FOR RENT.** Available 6/1/17. All utilities plus cable and all appliances with washer/dryer are included. Non-smokers. Security first/last month, $1100./month. 860-748-9457

**GLASTONBURY CENTER – 2 Bdrm $1,350 Inc. Heat / Hot water.** Excellent condition. Large 2 bdrm; Lvg room; Bath w/tub, shower, and fan; Kitchen w/gas range and dishwasher. Private parking lot; laundry in building; large storage area. Heat and hot water included. Perfect for someone looking for a well kept apartment. $1,350./mo. 860-798-7403.

**OFFICE - 2,250 SQ FT - Free standing building on Hebron Avenue** with superior signage visibility for signage. Renovated house with great office layout. Amenities include; oil heat, central air conditioning, private parking, kitchen and storage, handicap bathroom and access ramp. Overflow parking area is available, perfect for equipment storage. $2,700/month net lease. Call 860-633-3353 X106 for more information.

**532 Main St. ▪ Portland ▪ $264,900**

Stately 2,870 sq. ft Colonial with 5 bedrooms. Pristine hardwood floors throughout. Original arched front door. UPDATED KITCHEN has gorgeous GRANITE Countertops and Island with Stainless appliances and recessed lighting and continues into the spacious Family room making this an OPEN Floor plan. Master bedroom

***★Redistricting cont. from page 1***

Another audience member asked whether one of the three redistricting scenarios would necessarily be chosen, or if yet another option might emerge.

While acknowledging it was not impossible, Bookman said another option beyond the three already presented was unlikely.

"The board hired consultants to do this…is it possible for a scenario to get tweaked? They always have that as an option but everything that changes changes something else too," said Bookman. That would require bringing the consultant back in.

Another audience member aired her frustration when she observed, "I don't know why you have such faith in the consultants—outside consultants who aren't a part of the community. Last time [when Nayaug opened in 2007] there were streets cut down the middle and people driving by a school to get to another school. It absolutely made no sense to so many parents."

After the Eastbury meeting, Redistricting Information Nights were also held this week at Buttonball on Tuesday and Hopewell on Wednesday. Hebron Avenue School's is slated for tonight (Thursday, April 6) at 6:30 p.m.

Following April vacation, meetings will be held at Naubuc on Monday, April 17 at 7 p.m., and at Nayaug on Tuesday, April 18 at 6:30 p.m.

The BOE is hoping to approve a redistricting plan in June. "Tonight is not your last opportunity to tell us what you think; it is really just your first," said Karp to those in attendance.

For more information about redistricting—and to view the details of the proposed scenarios—please visit www.glastonburyus.org and click on "Redistricting Information" under "district news and announcements."

***★This 'n That cont. from page 8***

* * *

I was watching one of our local news channels recently when the TV anchor announced solemnly, "The bus driver killed when a tree fell on his bus last week died of blunt force trauma."

Gosh, who would have guessed?

* * *

Speaking of stupid comments, Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff (D-Norwalk), addressing the expansion of casino gambling in the state, recently said, "There's no logical reason to delay this any further."

That's not the stupid part. The stupid part was when he added in defense of the expansion: "The whole idea is not whether one endorses or doesn't endorse gambling. It's about saving thousands of jobs."

You could say the same thing about prostitution, but I don't see anybody lobbying for that.

* * *

I saw this beauty of a headline in a prominent CT daily newspaper (guess which one) last month: "Pope's sex abuse board vows to advance its work."

Altar boys take notice.

* * *

Here's some more gobbledy gook involving CT Technical High School System (CTHSS) Supt. Nivea L. Torres, who is now on leave for spending millions of dollars in taxpayer money on questionable publicity, including self-promotion as a "thought leader" whatever the hell that means.

In her platform statement for her candidacy for administrative vice president of the Association for Career and Technical Education (or ACTS), she noted that she developed a plan for day-to-day operations involving the CTHSS Community in the Administration and Management of Schools: "At the core of the plan is my theory of action that is aligned with the concept of building professional capital through distributed leadership."

Say what? Do you think this sort of gibberish makes you sound smarter?

* * *

My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION ("Just wait until we get home"), but my dad taught me about JUSTICE ("One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you !")

* * *

Here's another gem from the old classic Hollywood Squares TV show. The moderator asked Charley Weaver: "Which of your five senses tends to diminish as you get older?"

Weaver: "My sense of decency."

* * *

A child comes home from his first day at school.

His mother asks, "Well, what did you learn today?"

The kid replies, "Not enough. They want me to come back tomorrow."

**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing**
**Notice of Public Hearings**

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3TC 3/30, 4/6, 4/13

## The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

**ACROSS**
1 Quartet member
5 Catch, as flies
9 Contour
14 Bring in the

# LEGALS

***Glastonbury Citizen* Deadline is Monday at Noon**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**
**TOWN OF GLASTONBURY, CT**

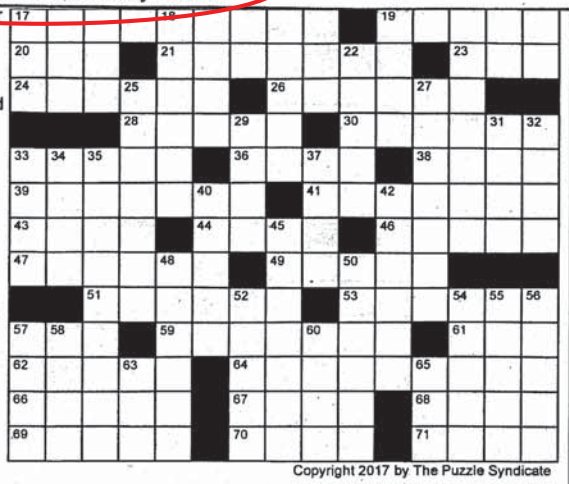
On April 3, 2017, the duly authorized agent of the Glastonbury Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency approved a shed within the wetlands' upland review area at 115 Heywood Drive.

1TC 4/6 Thomas & Nicole Knell, landowners

**LEGAL NOTICE**
**TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION**
**GLASTONBURY, CT**

During its regular mtg of April 4, 2017, the TPZ Comm took the following actions:

1. Unan provided a favorable recommendation to the Town Council (Zoning Authority) re: appl of the Town of Glastonbury for a Major Amendment to an Approved Planned Area Development - to allow golf course restaurant to remain open until 11pm on Fri & Sat & to provide for alcoholic beverage services in lieu of beer & wine as originally approved – 16 Fairway Xing – Village at Minnechaug PAD; Special Mtg to Confirm Vote 04/25/17, 5:30pm



**ACROSS**

9 Ice cream flavor
14 Start of a conclusion
15 Bad spots?
16 Metamorphosed insect
17 Futile
19 Pretense
20 Charged item
21 Unrefined fellow
23 Well-kept secret, for some
24 Knitted coverlet
26 Inner court
28 Role player
30 Chronicles
33 Trough diners
36 Senate stretch
38 Something to shut
39 Attitude
41 Run
43 Tolkien creatures
44 Centers of activity
46 Connective tissue
47 Wavy-lined, in botany
49 Run off to wed
51 Cloisonne coating
53 Big test
57 U2 album, "Rattle and ___"
59 "The Four Seasons" composer
61 Frat letter
62 Boxing site
64 Maturity
66 Kind of closet
67 Exhausted, with "in"
68 Doing nothing
69 Band of eight
70 Wraps up
71 Danson and Koppel

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**DOWN**

1 Old photo tint
2 Smoking gun
3 Getting on
4 Boatload
5 Scout's quest
6 Type of tea
7 Catch
8 Kind of button
9 Small earthen pot
10 Cousin of an ostrich
11 Twin-hulled vessel
12 Bug-eyed
13 Bar ___
18 Remnants
22 Muscle contraction
25 Like some training
27 Never tested
29 Sgt. Snorkel's dog
31 Like the White Rabbit
32 Gush
33 Urban woe
34 Lean and sinewy
35 Small step
37 Disturb
40 Fragrant resin
42 ___ de corps
45 Chinese porcelain
48 Wise one
50 Lots and lots
52 Sidestep
54 Eat away
55 "Get ___ of yourself!"
56 Valuable veins
57 Circle overhead?
58 Acid linked to gout
60 Bergman's "Casablanca" role
63 Bridal bio word
65 Chart topper

***Answers to Last Week's Crossword:***

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | A | I | T | A | | E | W | E | | D | O | W | S | E |
| A | U | R | A | L | | G | E | M | | A | R | O | M | A |
| S | T | A | V | E | | R | A | I | N | M | A | K | E | R |
| H | O | S | E | | D | E | L | T | A | | C | E | L | L |
| | | C | R | O | A | T | | | B | O | U | N | T | Y |
| S | P | I | N | A | L | | G | H | O | U | L | | | |
| L | A | B | | R | E | D | O | U | B | T | A | B | L | E |
| A | T | L | A | S | | I | N | N | | C | R | E | E | L |
| T | H | E | R | M | O | M | E | T | E | R | | T | E | A |
| | | | T | A | P | E | R | | M | O | D | E | R | N |
| F | A | M | I | N | E | | | R | I | P | E | N | | |
| L | E | A | F | | R | A | Z | O | R | | C | O | L | T |
| I | R | R | I | T | A | T | E | D | | F | R | I | A | R |
| C | I | R | C | A | | O | R | E | | E | E | R | I | E |
| K | E | Y | E | D | | M | O | O | | W | E | E | N | Y |

public inspection.

1TC 3/30

John M. Tanski, Chairman
Nils G. Carlson, Secretary

2TC 3/23, 3/30

SHARON H. PURTILL, CHAIRMAN
MICHAEL BOTELHO, SECRETARY

## Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing
## Notice of Public Hearings

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3TC 3/30, 4/6, 4/13

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WANTED TO BUY**

**USED KITCHEN CABINETS NEEDED FOR HUNTER'S CAMP IN NH.** Can't afford to pay a lot. Call 860-716-8244.

## E-Mail Letters

Letter writers are encouraged to e-mail their letters to *The Citizen* at jim@glcitizen.com. A daytime phone number must be provided for verification.

# EMPLOYMENT

**SMALL LOCAL TRUCKING COMPANY:** Looking for part-time CDL driver. Must have good driving record. Please call 860-342-4848. Ask for Dan.

**LINDA'S CRITTER SITTERS, LLC IS LOOKING FOR A MATURE, RELIABLE, PET-LOVER TO JOIN OUR TEAM!** This job is purrfect for people that like working with animals. The job opening is for a part-time year round position. Background checks will be done. Some pet care experience and internet access is required. No phone calls please. For more information, please go to; http://lindascrittersittersllc.com

**QUALITY INSPECTORS WANTED FOR LOCAL AEROSPACE COMPANY IN GLASTONBURY.** If interested please send resume to dburnee@heico.com

**THE KIDS CLUB CHILD CARE CENTER** in Marlborough is looking to immediately fill 2 part time positions. One is M-F 7:30-2:30 working in our expanding under 3 program. The other is M-F 2:30/3-5:30 in our preschool and after school care position. The person must be dependable, reliable flexible and have experience working with children of all ages. For more information please contact the center at 860-295-0498.

Volunteer. The Benefits Are ***Extraordinary!***

**Extraordinary Benefits:**
- You'll feel really, really good!
- You'll meet delightful dogs, fabulous felines, and some pretty special humans too!

**Volunteer Positions Available — Day & Evening Hours:**
- **East Hampton & Wethersfield facilities** – Dogs: walking; clean & feed; socialization
- **East Hartford facility** – Cats: clean & feed; socialization; medical & placement teams

PROTECTORS & ANIMALS

Scan for more info

Please call **860-569-0722** or visit **www.poainc.org**

# Affidavit of Publication

State of Connecticut

May 17, 2017

County of Hartford

I, Gregory R. Barden, do solemnly swear that I am the General Manager of the Wethersfield Rare Reminder, a newspaper published weekly in the State of Connecticut, and that from my own personal knowledge and reference to the files of said publication, the advertisement of "Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing Notice of Public Hearings" was inserted on March 30, 2017, April 6, 2017 and April 13, 2017.

In the amount of: $293.28

Gregory R. Barden, General Manager

Subscribed and sworn before me on 17th Day of May 2017

Notary Public

My Commission Expires on

**CHARLES E. MAYNARD**
***NOTARY PUBLIC***
**MY COMMISSION EXPIRES**
**JANUARY 31, 2021**

## Rare Reminder, Inc.

222 Dividend Road * P.O. Box 289, Rocky Hill, CT 060067 * 860-563-9386

level."

The panel actually represented many levels-from addiction service administrators and nonprofit programs, to first responders-but many of those in attendance agreed that conversations with teens and adolescents need to happen early, and speakers echoed the sentiment.

The forum, organized by state Reps. said. Donnalyn Notaro, a town resident who lost her teenage daughter to addiction last summer, is convinced that it was the largest factor in her case.

"My daughter would still be alive today if she had the proper support," Notaro said during the discussion portion that followed panelist comments. "It's so hard to get, whether it's insurance. If she had the help said.

Nationally, there's been a 300 percent increase in heroin and opiate abuse-related cases. In state, DMHAS reports that 50 percent of clients served come to them with opioid-driven addictions, she said.

"That's a change for us," Delphin-Rittmon said. "It used to be alcohol."

So Departments and nonprofits are a desire to initiate a discussion within the school district regarding education and prevention.

"A Board of Education doesn't know what's going on unless we hear from people like you," she said during the discussion. "It's hard to get up there and say what you said at a Board of Education meeting. Trust me, we will be doing something."

# Memorial Day Committee Announces Annual Parade Details

The Memorial Day Committee is pleased to announce that plans for the annual Memorial Day Parade and cere- from Wethersfield who have died between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017. If any family member would like to

Wethersfield - Memorial Day Parade, c/o Parks and Recreation Department, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield,

**LEGAL NOTICE**
**PUBLIC HEARING ON BUDGET OF 2017-18**
**TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD**

There will be a Public Hearing on the entire 2017-18 Proposed Town Budget on Monday, April 17, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, CT 06109.

Agenda:

Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett – Board of Education Budget

Town Manager, Jeff Bridges – Entire Town Budget

The full text of these proposed documents is available for public inspection in the Town Manager's Office, Town Clerk's Office, Library and online at www.wethersfieldct.gov.

Dated at Wethersfield, Connecticut this 30th day of March, 2017.

Dolores Sassano
Town Clerk

041317

www.RareReminder.com

**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing Notice of Public Hearings**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) will be holding three (3) Public Hearings for the Hartford-Brainard Airport Federal Environmental Assessment (EA) and State Environmental Impact Assessment (EIE) for Tree Clearing. At these meetings, information on the overall project and the study's findings, including the Preferred Alternative, will be presented. The doors for all meetings will open at 6:30PM with the hearing beginning at 7:00PM. The meeting will be held at the following locations on the following dates:

Meeting 1-Hartford: **Tuesday April 18**, Bulkeley High School, Auditorium (300 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114)

Meeting 2-Glastonbury: **Wednesday, April 19**, Glastonbury Town Hall, Council Chambers (2155 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033)

Meeting 3-Wethersfield: **Thursday, April 27** Wethersfield Town Hall (505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109)

Information regarding the Environmental Assessment for Tree Clearing is currently available at http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/.

041317

located in the kitchen and bathroom to match the existing light patterns with vinyl clad wood Heritage windows at 89 Garden Street. (4605)

Elaine and Matt Guida seek to replace a wood bathroom window with a vinyl window and to replace the storm doors on the front and back porches with fiberglass six (6) panel Masonite doors at 47-49 Church Street.

Nance Kriscenski seeks to replace the wood front door with a leaded glass fan light with a wood door with a four (4) pane window at 16 Avalon Place. (4607)

David Haines seeks to replace the existing deck with a new pressure treated wood deck in the dimensions of 12'x14' with a 3' stair section at 16 Old Smithy Lane. (4608)

Judith Melchreit seeks to remove, replace and expand the existing fencing along the rear property line with approximately 30 sections of solid wood 6' panels in a Convex style having four (4) panels parallel with Main Street in the same material but straight with a criss cross lattice topper at 357 Main Street. (4609)

Town of Wethersfield
Historic District Commission

Fred P. Valente
Duly Authorized

041317

Dated at Wethersfield, Connecticut, this 13th day of April 2017

field Historical Society will host the 12th annual Taste of Wethersfield benefit™ Saturday, April 8, from 7-9 p.m. at the Wethersfield Museum in the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center. Do not miss the tastiest time in town! Enjoy lively musical entertainment while you immerse yourself in the inspired dishes from some of the best restaurants and caterers in the Greater Hartford community. Participants include Carbone's, The Place 2 Be, ShopRite of Manchester and East Hartford, Wood-n-Tap, Buy-Rite Liquors and so much more! Savor a variety of great wines and beers that pair well with the food tastings and put in your bid for some of the great items at our silent auction. Celebrate with friends and try new things at this fun event that helps fund Wethersfield Historical Society's free or low cost educational programs for children and adults. Generous corporate sponsors of the event include ShopRite of Manchester & East Hartford, Mendoza and Associates, People's United Bank, City Fish Market and D'Esopo Funeral Chapel.

For one price, attendees gain access to all the food and drink at the event. General admission tickets are $35 when purchased in advance through Friday, April 7, online at www.wethersfieldhistory.org or by mailing a check or coming in person to our administrative offices at 150 Main ST., Wethersfield, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. General admission tickets can also be purchased at the door for $40. Patron tickets can be purchased online at www.wethersfieldhistory.org, via mail or in person at the administrative offices at 150 Main ST. for $55. Patrons enjoy full access to the food, drink and entertainment, as well as a special prize drawing just for them. This event is only open to attendees 21 and over.

The Keeney Memorial Cultural Center offers ample free parking and is handicapped accessible. For more information, contact the society offices at 860-529-7656 or visit www.wethersfieldhistory.org.

# Memorial Day Committee Announces Annual Parade Details

The Memorial Day Committee is pleased to announce that plans for the annual Memorial Day Parade and ceremony are underway. Chairperson Larry Spellacy announces that this year's parade will begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 27.

Wethersfield Memorial Day Parade Committee 2017 is Lee Sekas, Councilor Anthony Spinella, Board of Education Member John Cascio, Councilor Donna Hemmann, Chairman Larry Spellacy, Councilor Amy Bello, John Console and Sal Cucia, James Clynch, State Rep. Russell Morin, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Schroll, State Sen. John Fonfara, State Sen. Paul Doyle, Rick Newell and Lt. Thomas Mitney.

The committee would also like to announce it is accepting nominations for parade marshal(s). Individuals are selected as parade marshal(s) based on their military service and/or contributions to the community. Nominations will be accepted at the Parks & Recreation Office at Town Hall through Friday, March 24. Please include a brief bio with the submittal. Further information can be obtained by contacting the office at 860-721-2890. Organizations interested in marching in the parade may make a request to do so by going to the parade's website at www.wethersfieldct.com/recreation. Click on "Memorial Day Parade" under Additional Links.

Anyone interested in volunteering and helping out in this year's parade is asked to contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 860-721-2890.

As part of the ceremonies held at the Village Cemetery, the committee is compiling a list of those veterans from Wethersfield who have died between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017. If any family member would like to have their loved one's name read out loud during the Memorial Day Service, please contact the Committee at memorial.day@wethersfieldct.gov. Previous lists of individuals included those who served in the United States Army, Coast Guard, Army Air Corps, Marines, Air Force, National Guard, Army Reserves, and the Italian Army.

In recognition of honoring all veterans the GFWC/CT of Newington/Wethersfield Women's club, a member of General Federation of Women's Clubs, will be conducting a "Flags of Appreciation". Those wishing to honor a veteran may purchase a flag that will be placed on the Broad Street Green near the reviewing stand. Each flag would have a laminated tag along with a GFWC ribbon. The front side would give the veteran's name, armed forces, date of service and location. Flags would be sold by the club for $10 in "honor of" or "in memory of any veteran". Questions or additional information may be obtained by contacting Diane Mirebito-Hugh at 860-788-3415 or email hough_john_c@hotmail.com. Forms are available at the Parks & Recreation Office. Proceeds will benefit various veteran's projects.

The Parade Committee is once again requesting financial contributions for the parade activities this year. Any contribution will be deeply appreciated. Information can be obtained from and contributions made to: Town of Wethersfield - Memorial Day Parade, c/o Parks and Recreation Department, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, CT 06109.

Further information about the parade such as the Line of March, street closures, etc. can be found on the parade's web site at www.wethersfieldct.com/recreation.

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Town Manager, Jeff Bridges – Entire Town Budget

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Dated at Wethersfield, Connecticut this 30th day of March, 2017.

Dolores Sassano
Town Clerk

040617

**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing Notice of Public Hearings**

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033017

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Hartford HealthCare
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033017

Hartford Courant
media group

# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

**State of Connecticut**

**April 13, 2017**

**County of Hartford**

I, Renee N. Janes, do solemnly swear that I am a Sales Assistant of the Hartford Courant, printed and published daily, in the state of Connecticut and that from my own personal knowledge and reference to the files of said publication the advertisement of Public Notices was inserted in the regular edition.

On Dates as Follows:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 03/30/2017 | 166.80; | 03/30/2017 | 10.00; | 04/06/2017 | 166.80; |
| 04/13/2017 | 166.80 | | | | |

In the Amount of:

$510.40
Stephanie P. Parsons - CU00576632
4825055
Full Run

Renee N Janes Sales Assistant,
Renee N. Janes

Subscribed and sworn before me on April 13, 2017

Robin L Collar **Notary Public**

**ROBIN L. COLLAR**
***NOTARY PUBLIC***
MY COMISSION EXPIRES MAR 31, 2021

Order # - 4825055

Hartford Courant
media group

**Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Impact Assessment for Tree Clearing Notice of Public Hearings**

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Order # - 4825055

# Hartford Courant media group

## Publication Date: 04/13/2017

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# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

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Title of Ad placed: Public Notice

Company who placed the ad: CHA. Consulting, Inc

Size of Ad: 1/6 pg

Ana L. Torres
ANA L. TORRES
NOTARY PUBLIC
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES AUGUST 31, 2021

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Nail Salon looking for full time and/or part time, experienced individual who can do manicure, pedicure, and waxing.

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### Aviso para solicitudes de subvención

El Departamento de Agricultura de Connecticut (Connecticut Department of Agriculture) está solicitando documentos conceptuales para proyectos que esencialmente realcen la competitividad de cultivos especiales. Según la USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), se definen como cultivos especiales las frutas y vegetales, frutos secos, nueces, miel de arce (Maple syrup), miel, horticultura y cultivos de vivero.

Los proyectos deben impactar y producir resultados cuantificables para la industria de cultivos especiales y/o para el público. Los proyectos sometidos no pueden comenzar hasta después del 1ro de enero de 2018 y terminar el 29 de septiembre, 2020. La concesión máxima será de $75,000.

Para mayor información y para la guía explicativa para someter los documentos conceptuales, consulte la página Web de la agencia: **www.CTgrown.gov/grants**, o contacte a Jaime Smith, en el 860-713-2559 o **jaime.smith@ct.gov**.

Propuestas conceptuales deberá llegar a Connecticut Department of Agriculture no más tardar 4:00 p.m. del 29 de marzo, 2017.

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## AVISO DE AUDIENCIAS PÚBLICAS

Evaluación del Impacto Ambiental para la remoción de árboles en el Aeropuerto Hartford-Brainard

Por el presente aviso se comunica que la Connecticut Airport Authority (Autoridad Aeroportuaria de Conneticut) (CAA) llevará a cabo tres (3) audiencias públicas para la Evaluación Ambiental Federal (EA) del Aeropuerto de Hartford-Brainard y la Evaluación Estatal del Impacto Ambiental (EIE) por la poda y remoción de árboles.
En estas reuniones, se presentará la información sobre el proyecto en general y las conclusiones del estudio, incluida la alternativa seleccionada.

Las puertas para todas las reuniones se abrirán a las 6:30 PM con la audiencia comenzando a las 7:00 PM. La reunión se efectuara en los siguientes lugares en las fechas a continuación:

**Martes 18 de abril**
Reunión 1- Hartford:
Bulkeley High School, Auditorio
300 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114

**Miércoles, 19 de abril**
Reunión 2- Glastonbury:
Edificio municipal de Glastonbury, Oficinas del Consejo
2155 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033

**Jueves 27 de abril**
Reunión 3-Wethersfield:
Edificio municipal de Wethersfield
505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109

Podrá solicitar asistencia gratuita del idioma o interpretación de señas contactando a Colin Goegel al correo electronico cgoegel@ctairports.org o al 860-254-5628 por lo menos cinco (5) días hábiles antes de la reunión. Se harán todos los esfuerzos necesarios para responder a la solicitud de asistencia. La información sobre la Evaluación Ambiental para la poda y remoción de Arboles está disponible en http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/.

## AUDIENCIA PARA: JPZ, INC

### AUDIENCIA PUBLICA DEL WILBRAHAM BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)

El Wilbraham Junta de Salud BOH organiza una audiencia pública para el 24 de abril de 2017, a las 7:00 pm, con relación a la solicitud de JPZ Inc., de llevar a cabo una importante modificación del actual emplazamiento de la instalación de manejo de residuos sólidos, ubicada en el 120 Old Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095.

**La reunión tendrá lugar en 240 Springfield St., Wilbraham, MA 01095.**

A la actual instalación se le permite aceptar un máximo de 645 toneladas por día y un promedio de 500 toneladas diarias de deshechos de construcción y demolición y neumáticos. El máximo anual tolerado es de 156 mil toneladas. No se plantea cambiar estos límites máximos.

La modificación propuesta es para poder aceptar deshechos sólidos municipales y tierra ligeramente contaminada. La instalación actual tiene un área de 23.2 acres. No se plantea tampoco aumentar el área. El horario de funcionamiento propuesto es de 7:00 AM a 6:00 PM, lunes a viernes, y 7:00 AM a 5:00 PM los sábados.

El Department of Environmental Protection (Departamento de Protección Ambiental) emitió un informe en el que determina que la ubicación es la adecuada para la instalación propuesta.

Copias del informe de factibilidad del Department of Environmental Protection (Departamento de Protección Ambiental) y el criterio de factibilidad de la ubicación (310 CMR 16.00) están disponibles para ser copiadas y consultadas, junto a la solicitud presentada, en la oficina del Wilbraham Town Hall in the Board of Health, durante las horas de labores del Town Hall, de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm. El solicitante es JPZ, Inc., 295 Pasco Road, Springfield, MA 01151.

Los comentarios escritos sobre la solicitud, pueden ser recibidos por el Board of Health hasta más tardar el 21 de abril de 2017, a las 4:00 pm. Los comentarios deben ser enviados a la siguiente dirección: Wilbraham Board of Health 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095.

Visite nuestra website
WWW.LAVOZHISPANACT.COM

# Clasificados La Voz Hispana

**Tel: 203-865-2272**

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El Departamento de Agricultura de Connecticut (Connecticut Department of Agriculture) está solicitando documentos conceptuales para proyectos que esencialmente realcen la competitividad de cultivos especiales. Según la USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), se definen como cultivos especiales las frutas y vegetales, frutos secos, nueces, miel de arce (Maple syrup), miel, horticultura y cultivos de vivero.

Los proyectos deben impactar y producir resultados cuantificables para la industria de cultivos especiales y/o para el público. Los proyectos sometidos no pueden comenzar hasta después del 1ro de enero de 2018 y terminar el 29 de septiembre, 2020. La concesión máxima será de $75,000.

Para mayor información y para la guía explicativa para someter los documentos conceptuales, consulte la página Web de la agencia: **www.CTgrown.gov/grants**, o contacte a Jaime Smith, en el 860-713-2559 o **jaime.smith@ct.gov**.

Propuestas conceptuales deberá llegar a Connecticut Department of Agriculture no más tardar 4:00 p.m. del 29 de marzo, 2017.

## OPORTUNIDAD DE EMPLEO:

**Planchador de Camisas y Embolsador**
**Dry Cleaners en Westport**

Se nesecita una persona para planchar camisas y una para embolsar con experiencia a tiempo completo. Las personas deben de tener cierto dominio de inglés.

Interesados llamar:
**914-482-2161**
**203-454-2098**

## EN NORWALK
### VENDO CASA DE 3 FAMILIAS

ATENCION INVERSIONISTAS!
DE OPORTUNIDAD
CASA DE TRES FAMILIAS EN SOUTH NORWALK. LAS TRES UNIDADES ESTAS RENTADAS. LA CASA TIENE 2 APARTAMENTOS
DE 3 DORMITORIOS Y UNO DE UN DORMITORIO. SERIOS INTERESADOS LLAMAR PARA
MAYOR INFORMACION AL TEL.
**(203) 219-7316**

## MANTENIMIENTO y PORTERO

ESCFederal compañia de mantenimiento está buscando candidatos para trabajar en Westbrook en las posiciones de: Mantenimiento a tiempo completo y Portero de tiempo parcial
Si tienes experiencia por favor llame a
Wes Colon **860-333-3964**

. . . . . .

ESCFederal is looking to fill the following positions in Westbrook:
Full Time Maintenance Tech and Part Time Porter If you have experience please call.

## SE ALQUILA APARTAMENTO EN WEST HAVEN

Se Aquila apartamento de 3 dormitorios, estacionamiento para 2 autos en el "driveway", espacio asesible para almacenar en el "basement", acceso al patio. En la calle William St., Puedes caminar a la playa.
$1,350. por mes más deposito.
No se aceptan mascotas.
**347-624-1177**

## EXPERTAS EN UÑAS

Se necesita personal con experiencia en unas Acrílicas, UV gel, Pedicure y Manicure.
Se le pagara $700.00 por semana.

**Watertown TANNING & Full Service SALON**
619 Straits Turnpike
Watertown, CT 06795
**203-910-2443**
*Pregunte por Wendy*

## AUDIENCIA PARA: JPZ, INC
### AUDIENCIA PUBLICA DEL WILBRAHAM BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)

El Wilbraham Junta de Salud BOH organiza una audiencia pública para el 24 de abril de 2017, a las 7:00 pm, con relación a la solicitud de JPZ Inc., de llevar a cabo una importante modificación del actual emplazamiento de la instalación de manejo de residuos sólidos, ubicada en el 120 Old Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095.

**La reunión tendrá lugar en 240 Springfield St., Wilbraham, MA 01095.**

A la actual instalación se le permite aceptar un máximo de 645 toneladas por día y un promedio de 500 toneladas diarias de deshechos de construcción y demolición y neumáticos. El máximo anual tolerado es de 156 mil toneladas. No se plantea cambiar estos límites máximos.

La modificación propuesta es para poder aceptar deshechos sólidos municipales y tierra ligeramente contaminada. La instalación actual tiene un área de 23.2 acres. No se plantea tampoco aumentar el área. El horario de funcionamiento propuesto es de 7:00 AM a 6:00 PM, lunes a viernes, y 7:00 AM a 5:00 PM los sábados.

El Department of Environmental Protection (Departamento de Protección Ambiental) emitió un informe en el que determina que la ubicación es la adecuada para la instalación propuesta.

Copias del informe de factibilidad del Department of Environmental Protection (Departamento de Protección Ambiental) y el criterio de factibilidad de la ubicación (310 CMR 16.00) están disponibles para ser copiadas y consultadas, junto a la solicitud presentada, en la oficina del Wilbraham Town Hall in the Board of Health, durante las horas de labores del Town Hall, de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm. El solicitante es JPZ, Inc., 295 Pasco Road, Springfield, MA 01151.

Los comentarios escritos sobre la solicitud, pueden ser recibidos por el Board of Health hasta más tardar el 21 de abril de 2017, a las 4:00 pm. Cualquier persona que desee intervenir o participar en este procedimiento debe presentarse a la "Board of Health" (Junta de Salud), con una petición escrita permiso para intervenir o participar a más tardar el 17 de abril de 2017. Conforme con 310 CMR 16.20(9). Los comentarios deben ser enviados a la siguiente dirección: Wilbraham Board of Health 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095.

## AVISO DE AUDIENCIAS PÚBLICAS

Evaluación del Impacto Ambiental para la remoción de árboles en el Aeropuerto Hartford-Brainard

Por el presente aviso se comunica que la Connecticut Airport Authority (Autoridad Aeroportuaria de Conneticut) (CAA) llevará a cabo tres (3) audiencias públicas para la Evaluación Ambiental Federal (EA) del Aeropuerto de Hartford-Brainard y la Evaluación Estatal del Impacto Ambiental (EIE) por la poda y remoción de árboles.
En estas reuniones, se presentará la información sobre el proyecto en general y las conclusiones del estudio, incluida la alternativa seleccionada.

Las puertas para todas las reuniones se abrirán a las 6:30 PM con la audiencia comenzando a las 7:00 PM. La reunión se efectuara en los siguientes lugares en las fechas a continuación:

**Martes 18 de abril**
Reunión 1- Hartford:
Bulkeley High School, Auditorio
300 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114

**Miércoles, 19 de abril**
Reunión 2- Glastonbury:
Edificio municipal de Glastonbury, Oficinas del Consejo
2155 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033

**Jueves 27 de abril**
Reunión 3-Wethersfield:
Edificio municipal de Wethersfield
505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109

Podrá solicitar asistencia gratuita del idioma o interpretación de señas contactando a Colin Goegel al correo electronico cgoegel@ctairports.org o al 860-254-5628 por lo menos cinco (5) días hábiles antes de la reunión. Se harán todos los esfuerzos necesarios para responder a la solicitud de asistencia. La información sobre la Evaluación Ambiental para la poda y remoción de Arboles está disponible en http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/.

Visite nuestra website
WWW.LAVOZHISPANACT.COM

# Clasificados La Voz Hispana

**Tel: 203-865-2272**

## OPORTUNIDAD DE EMPLEO

Salon de unas, esta buscando personal para tiempo completo y parcial, con experiencia en hacer manicure/Pedicure, Depilacion.

. . . . . .

Nail Salon looking for full time and/or part time, experienced individual who can do manicure, pedicure, and waxing.

**Sandy's nail salon, Inc**
533 West Main St, Cheshire, CT 06410
**203-250-6322**

## SE ALQUILA OFICINA DE ABOGADO EN HARTFORD

Tenemos espacio en una oficia para alquila inmediatamente, incluye todas las utilidades, cerca de la corte, el capitolio y la comunidad hispana.

**67 Russ St., 2nd pizo**
**860-549-4451**

## ATENCION TAXISTAS o CHOFERES

**Inmediatamente déjele saber a la persona que le espera adonde esta su auto.**
**www.Overheresign.com**
**Dquinn5560@yahoo.com**

**Dennis**
**203-258-0721**

## Presser/Planchador Westport, CT

Se necesita persona con experiencia para trabajar en un "dry cleaners" planchando.
A tiempo completo.
**DEAN CLEANERS OF WESTPORT**
415 Post Road West
Westport, CT 06880
Al lado de Wholefood Market
Pregunte por Mr. Kim
**203-227-0405**

## BI-LINGUAL CASHIER DELIVERY DRIVER FERRETERÍA EN EAST HAVEN

Ferretería familiar con más de 83 años, busca personas bilingues que sean enérgicas, confiables, y honestas para trabajar en las siguiente posiciones:

- **CAJERO** o **CAJERA**
  - *CASHIER*
- **CHOFER PARA HACER ENTREGAS**
  - *DELIVERY DRIVER*

Solicite en persona y pregunte por David

GOODY'S
Hardware & Paint
COMMERCIAL SALES DIVISION

**540 MAIN ST**
**East Haven, CT 06512**
**203-469-5335**

Tenemos casi todo lo necesario para los contratistas en general, los propietarios de viviendas y más.

## EXPERTAS EN UÑAS

Se necesita personal con experiencia en unas Acrílicas, UV gel, Pedicure y Manicure.
Se le pagara $700.00 por semana.

**Watertown TANNING & Full Service SALON**
619 Straits Turnpike
Watertown, CT 06795
**203-910-2443**
*Pregunte por Wendy*

## TAPICERO

*Se necesita tapicero para trabajar a tiempo completo, Se le pagara buen salario.*

*Trumbull, CT*

*Upholster needed full time. Good salary.*
**203-260-0181**

## GARAJE COMERCIAL PARA ALQUILAR EN NORWALK

Garaje comercial para alquilar en Norwalk Ideal para "landscaping" o "storage"

- 2,400 pies cuadrado.
- Techo de 14 pies.
- Puerta eléctrica de metal.

$1,500 por mes
NO es para taller de mecánica o "bodyshop".
**203-856-9515**

## THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

**Invitation for Bid (IFB)**
**Elevator Preventive Maintenance and Repairs**
**Solicitation Number: 079-AM-17-S**

The Housing Authority of the City of Bridgeport d/b/a Park City Communities (PCC) is currently seeking bids from qualified elevator companies to provide elevator preventive maintenance and repair authority-wide. There is a mix of elevator types and locations. Solicitation package will be available on **April 17, 2017.** To obtain a copy of the solicitation you must send your request to bids@parkcitycommunities.org, please reference solicitation number and title on the subject line. A pre-bid conference will be held at **150 Highland Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604 on May 2, 2017, @ 10:00 a.m**. Although attendance is not mandatory, submitting a bid for the project without attending conference is not in the best interest of the Offeror. Additional questions should be emailed only to bids@parkcitycommunities.org no later than **May 5, 2017 @ 3:00 p.m**. Answers to all the questions will be posted on PCC's Website: www.parkcitycommunities.org. Seal bids will be received until **May 18, 2016 @ 2:00 PM,** at which time the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

## AVISO DE AUDIENCIAS PÚBLICAS

Evaluación del Impacto Ambiental para la remoción de árboles en el Aeropuerto Hartford-Brainard

Por el presente aviso se comunica que la Connecticut Airport Authority (Autoridad Aeroportuaria de Conneticut) (CAA) llevará a cabo tres (3) audiencias públicas para la Evaluación Ambiental Federal (EA) del Aeropuerto de Hartford-Brainard y la Evaluación Estatal del Impacto Ambiental (EIE) por la poda y remoción de árboles.
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## THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

**Invitation for Bid (IFB)**
**C.F. Greene Apartments Unit Renovation**
**Solicitation Number: 078-PD-17-S**

The Housing Authority of the City of Bridgeport d/b/a Park City Communities (PCC) is requesting sealed bids for the unit renovations at C.F. Greene Apartments. A complete set of the plans and technical specifications will be available on **April 17, 2017.** To obtain a copy of the solicitation you must send your request to bids@parkcitycommunities.org, please reference solicitation number and title on the subject line. A pre-bid conference will be held at **150 Highland Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604 on April 27 2017 @ 10:00 a.m.** Although attendance is not mandatory, submitting a bid for the project without attending conference is not in the best interest of the Offeror. Additional questions should be emailed only to bids@parkcitycommunities.org no later than **May 4, 2017 @ 3:00 p.m.** Answers to all the questions will be posted on PCC's Website: www.parkcitycommunities.org. All bids must be received by mailed or hand delivered by **May 16, 2017 @ 2:00 PM,** to Ms. Caroline Sanchez, Contract Specialist, **150 Highland Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604,** at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. No bids will be accepted after the designated time.

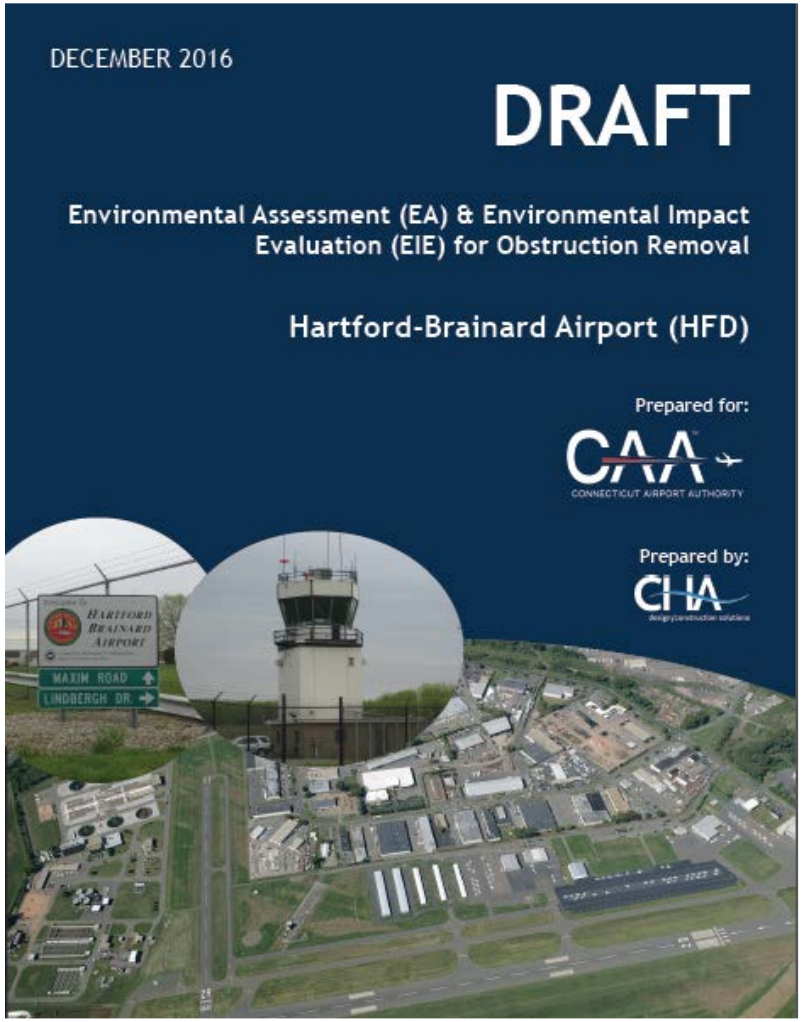
Visite nuestra website
WWW.LAVOZHISPANACT.COM

# *Draft Environmental Assessment for Tree Obstruction Removal*

## *Public Hearings*

## *April 18, 19, 27, 2017*

## *Hartford-Brainard Airport*




CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Project Background

- The Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) documents the potential impacts of tree obstruction removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
- Study satisfies both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA)

# Study & Project Process

**A. Prepare Study EA/EIE** (Spring 2017)

- Prepare Draft Study & Collect Comments ← We are here
- Prepare Final EA/EIE document

**B. Permitting & Approval Process** (2017/2018)

- Easements/agreements from property owners
- Additional survey and coordination with agencies
- Removal Plans & Environmental Permits

**C. Implementation** (2018/2019)

- Public bidding & award
- Tree removal activities & Permit Maintenance

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Airport Background

## Hartford-Brainard Airport Overview:

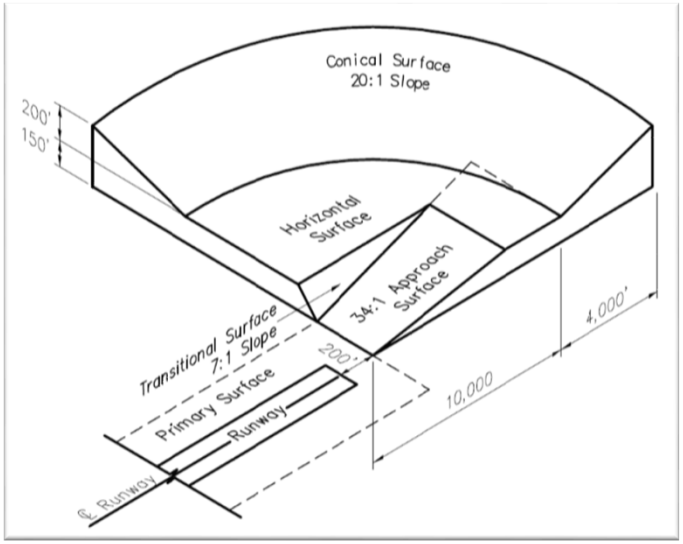
- Airport is a public-use 'regional' airport of state & national importance
- Classified as 'Regional' by FAA due to high levels of activity
- Supports all types of (non-commercial) general aviation aircraft
- Airport is a federally-obligated (must satisfy Federal requirements)
- Over 100 based aircraft
- 50,000+ annual operations
- Over 100 local jobs
- Economic contribution $43 million annually

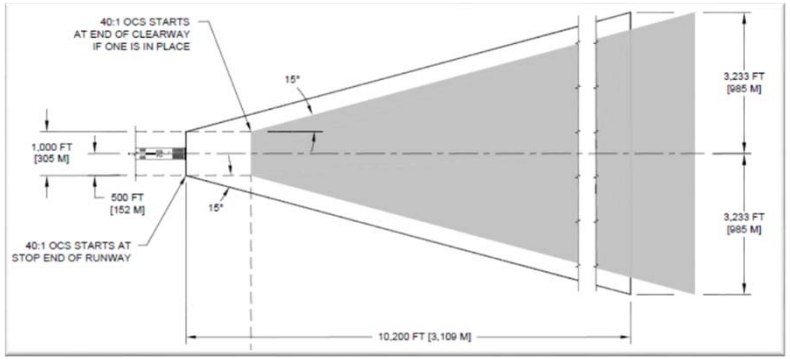
CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Airport Airspace & Design Standards

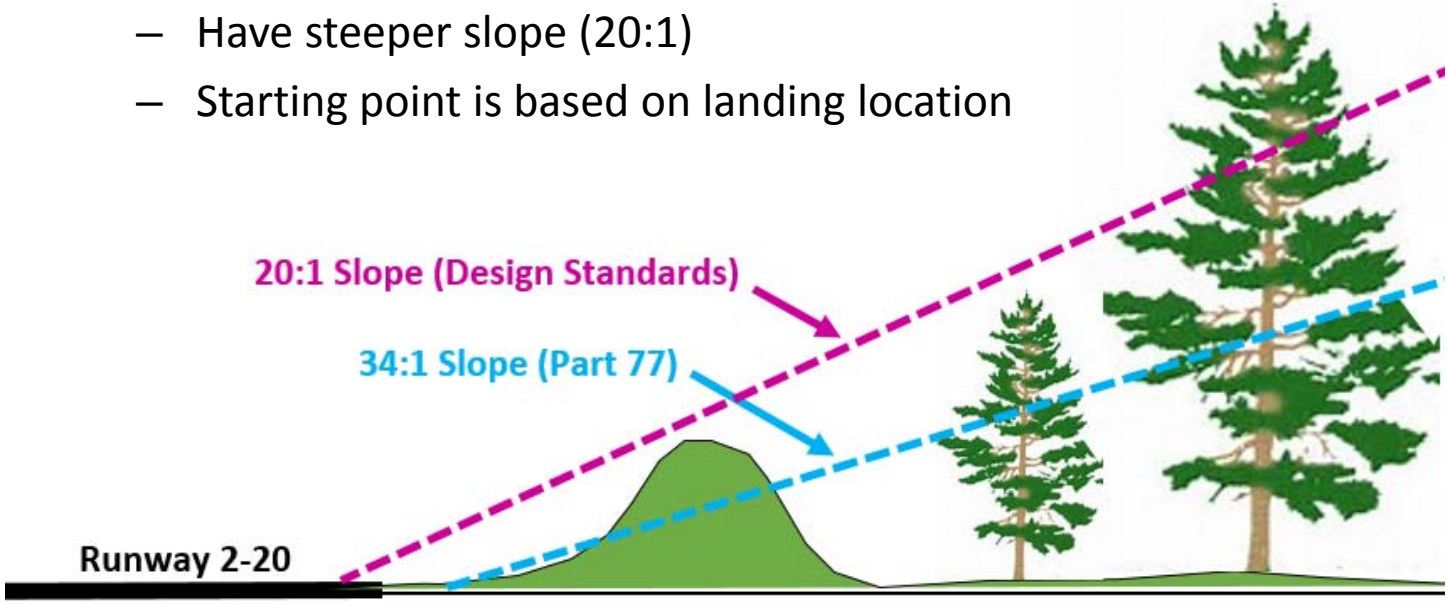
- Tree penetrations of the defined airspace are classified as obstructions, and should be removed for safety
- The EA addresses tree removal associated with:
  - Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77
  - Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Design Standards



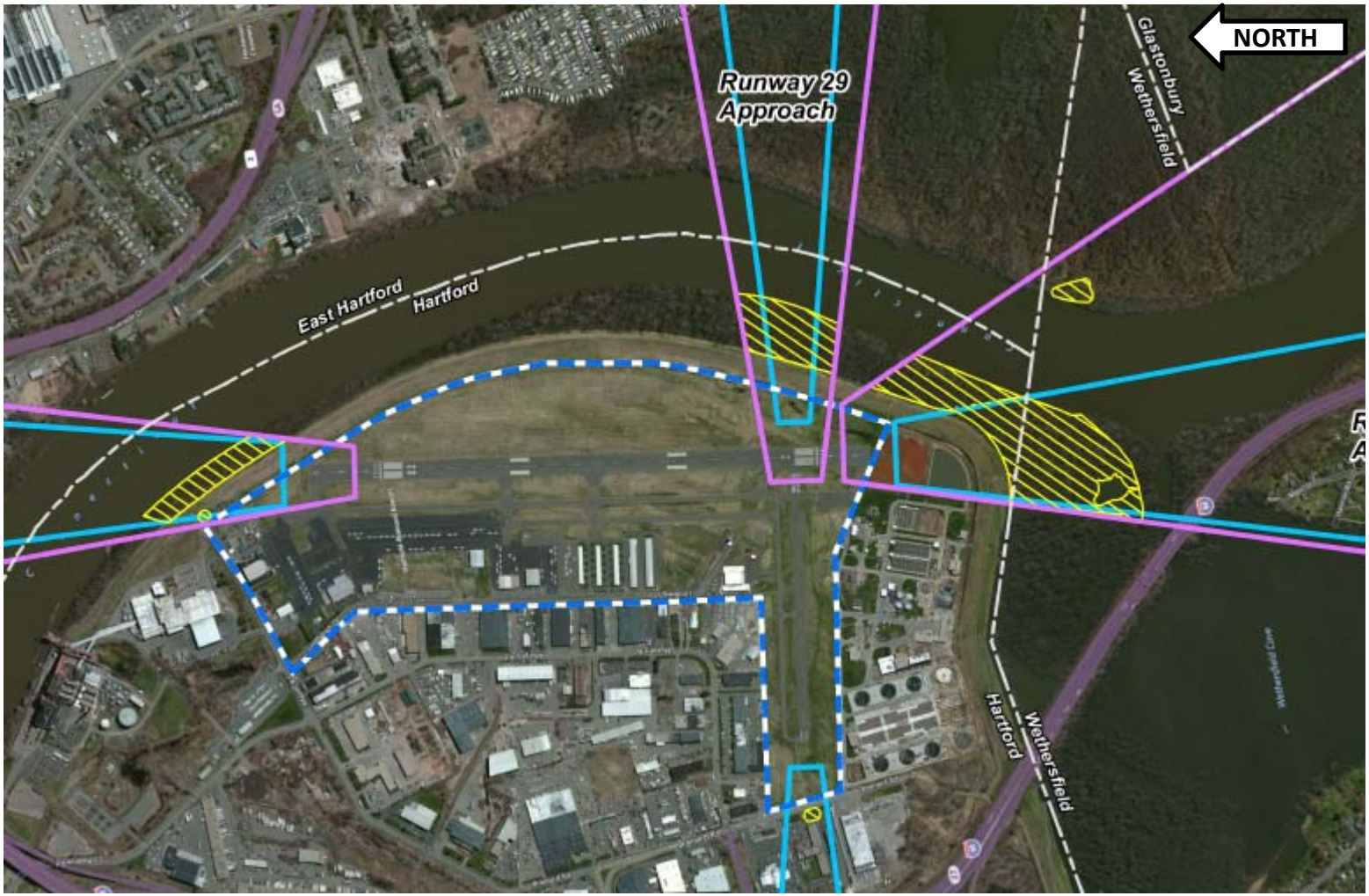



# Airport Airspace & Design Standards

- FAR Part 77
  - May have 'flatter' slope (more penetrations)
  - Start 200' beyond runway end
- FAA Design Standards – Recommended Alternative
  - Have steeper slope (20:1)
  - Starting point is based on landing location



# Project Area




CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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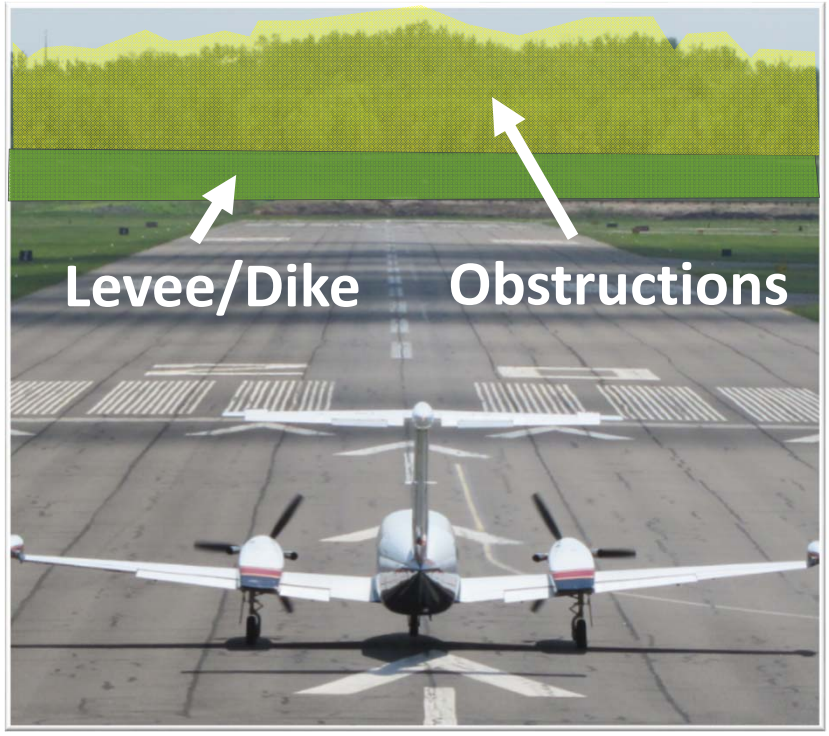
# Purpose and Need

- Purpose:
  - Improve airport safety by removing tree obstructions that penetrate Federal Airspace & Design Standards.
- Need:
  - Compliance with Federal airspace and design criteria
  - **The Airport is <u>required</u> to address the <u>safety</u> deficiencies to the extent feasible.**



# Alternatives

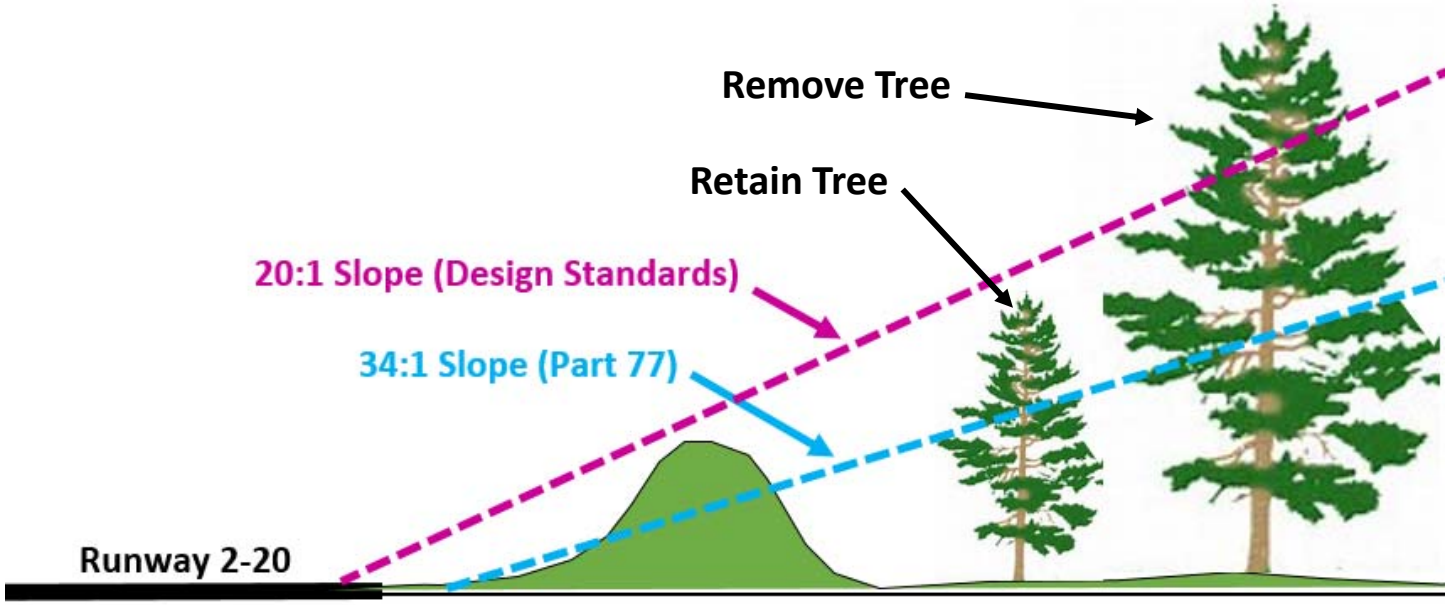
- **No Action Alternative**:
  - Minimizes environmental impacts
  - Risk to airport uses and community
  - **Not Recommended**

- **Full Obstruction Removal Alternative**:
  - Removes Part 77 airspace obstructions
  - **Not Recommended**

- **Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative**:
  - Remove Design Standards penetrations
  - Reduces environmental impacts
  - **Recommended**

# Obstruction Removal Comparison

- **Full Obstruction Removal Alternative (**not recommended**):**
  - Part 77 – 34:1 Slope, based on the runway end
- **Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative (recommended)**
  - Design Standards – 20:1 Slope, based on the displaced threshold



# City of Hartford Tree Ordinance

- Project is subject to Harford Tree Ordinance:
  - Applies to public & private projects, including on public property
  - Requires mitigation

**ARTICLE VI.**
**TREE ORDINANCE**
**(Sec. 28-151)**

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative

CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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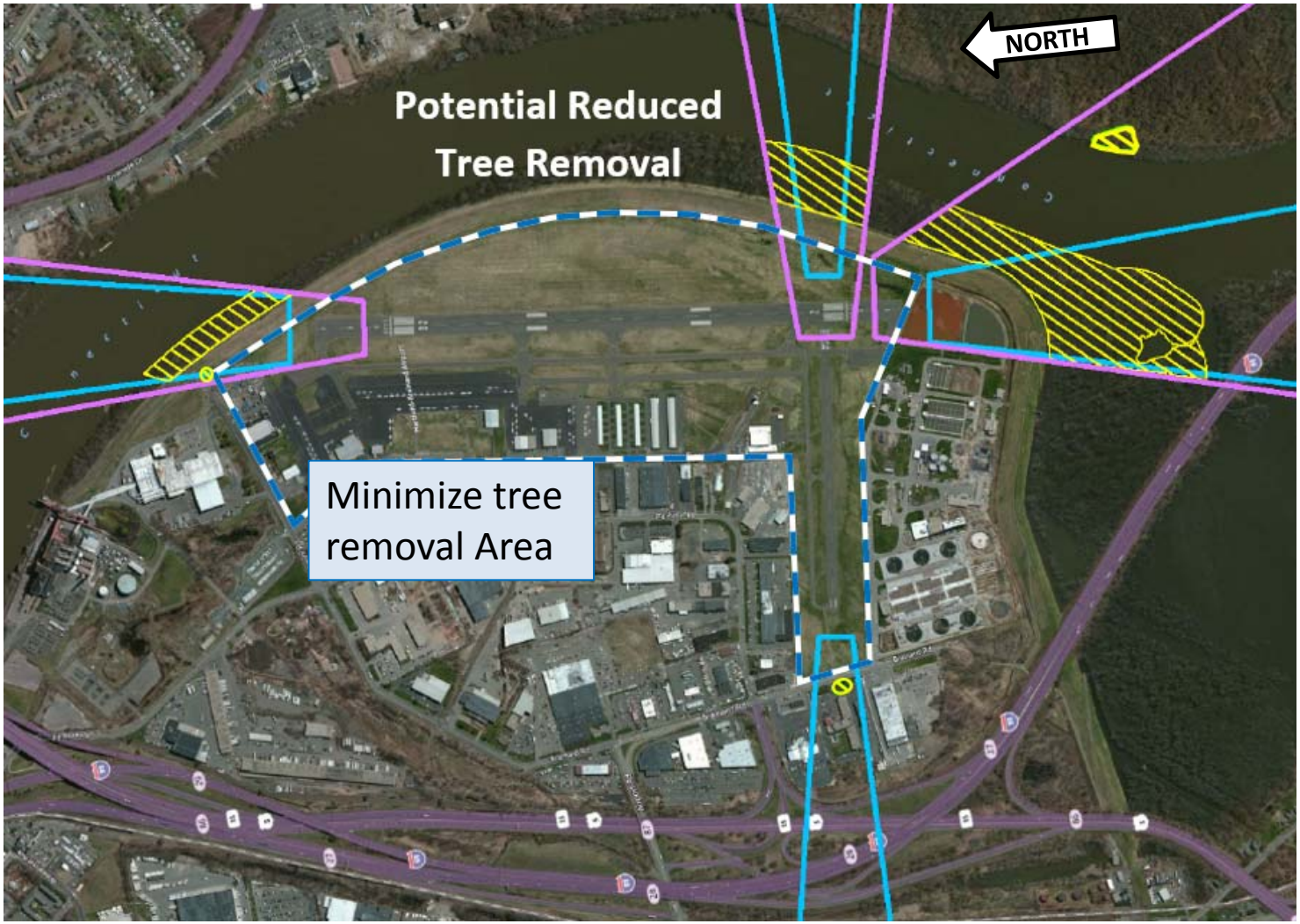
# Proposed Reduction in Tree Removal



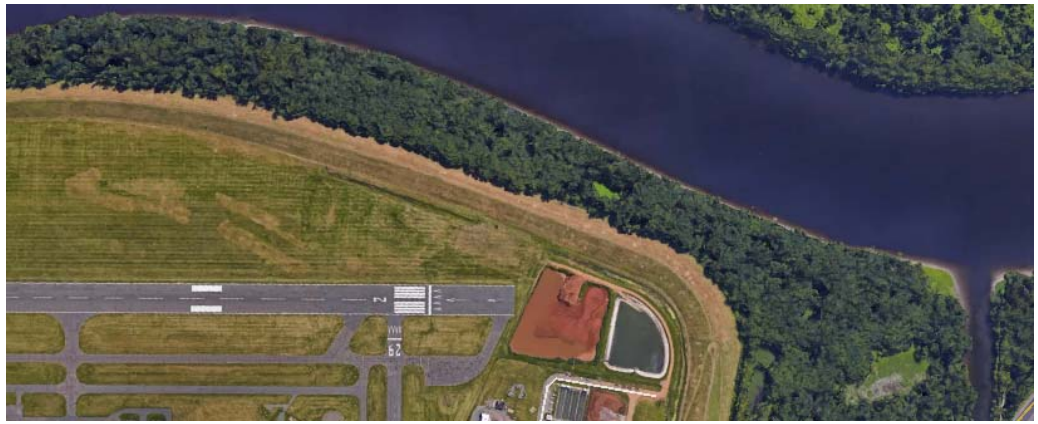

CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

# Tree Clearing Methods

A. Full clearing, stump removal & grading

B. Tree removal, retain underbrush & stumps

C. Selective thinning of tall trees



# A. Full Clearing, Stump Removal & Grading

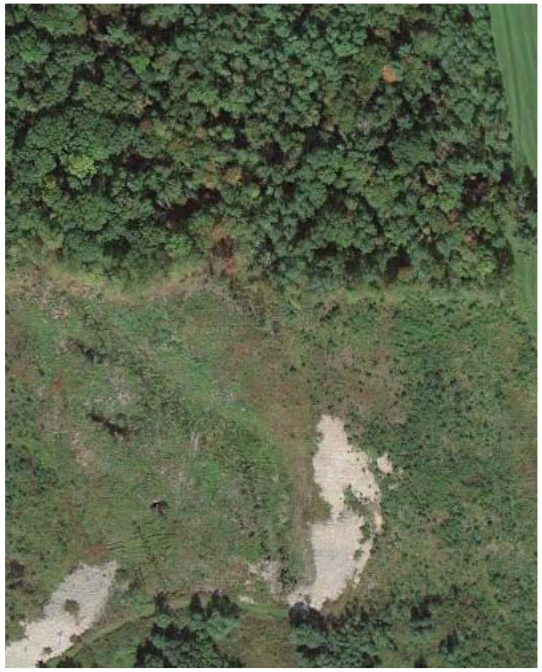
- No Tree Regrowth
- Area may be maintained as grass
- Not Recommended

# B. Tree Removal, Retain Underbrush & Stumps

- Tree Regrowth
- Periodic Maintenance (Approx. 10-20 years)
- Recommended

**Before - 2009**

**After - 2011**



**2016**

CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

# C. Selective Thinning of Tall Trees

- Tree Regrowth
- Periodic Maintenance (Approx. 5-10 Years)
- Recommended

**Before - 2013**

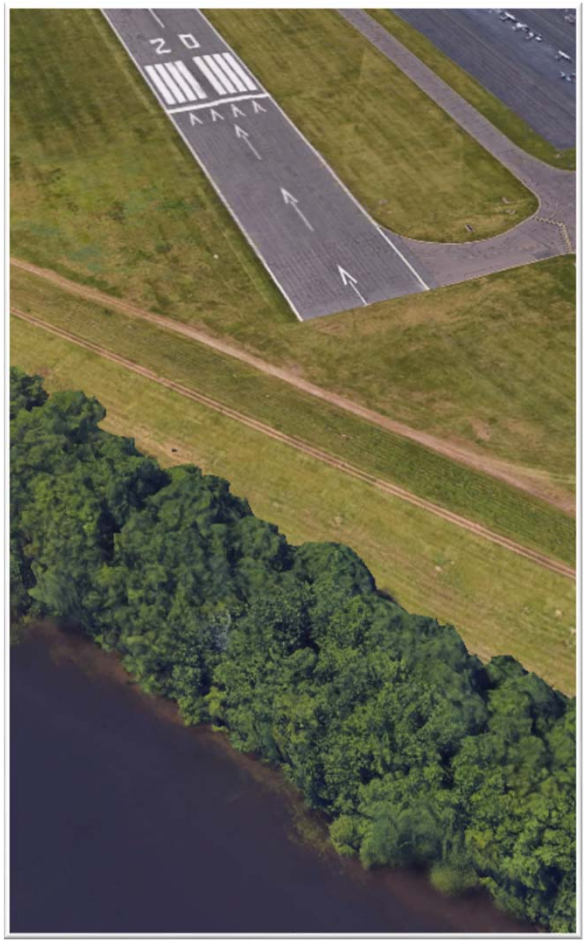
**After - 2015**

CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

# Environmental Consequences

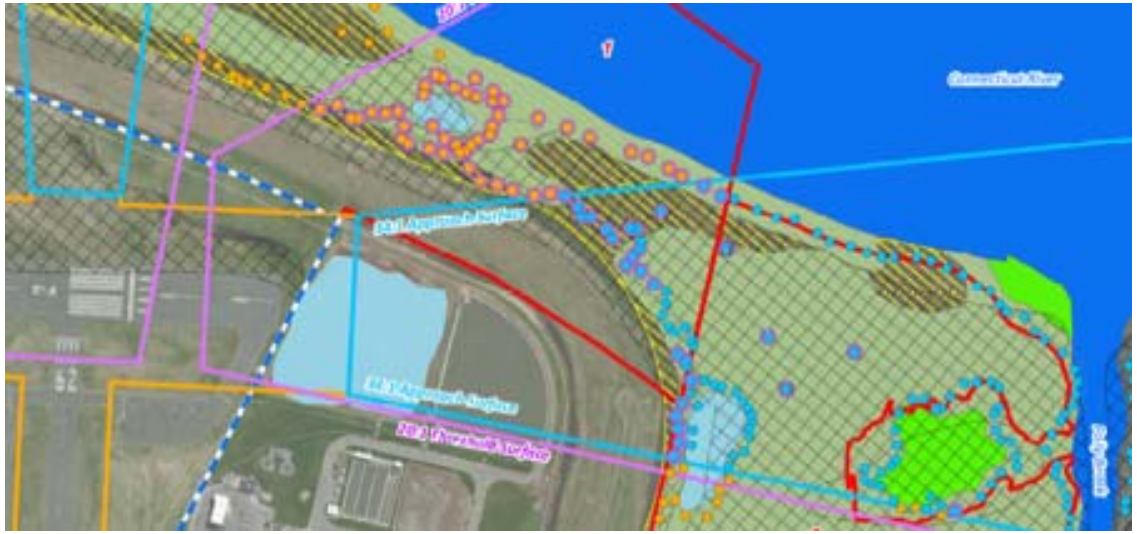
**Impact categories addressed**:

- Air Quality
- **Compatible Land Use**
- Construction Impacts
- **Parks & Recreational**
- Farmland
- **Threatened & Endangered Species**
- **Floodplains**
- Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste
- Historical, Archeological & Cultural Resources
- Light Emissions and Visual
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Noise
- **Socioeconomic Impacts (public health)**
- **Wetlands & Water Quality**



# Wetlands & Floodplains

- Tree removal areas include wetlands & floodplains
- Adherence to Federal & State permits requirements
  - State wetland permit will be required
  - Federal wetland permit may be required
  - Soil erosion controls & water quality



# Threatened and Endangered Species

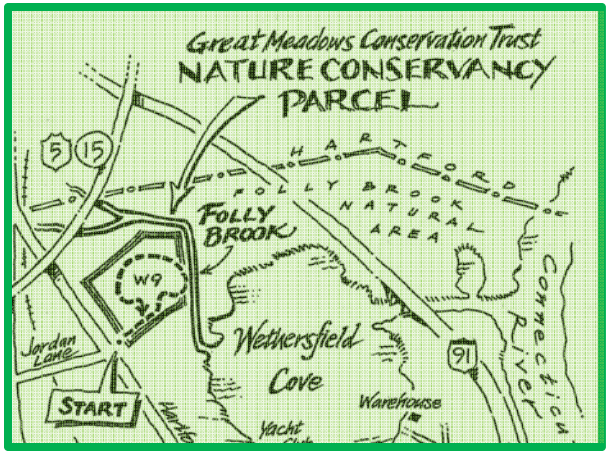
- Threatened Species
  - Bald Eagle and American Kestrel
  - Northern Long-eared Bat
  - Wood Thrush and Worm-eating Warbler
- Mitigation
  - Potential biological surveys during permitting
  - Seasonal restrictions
  - Coordination with CTDEEP & USFWS

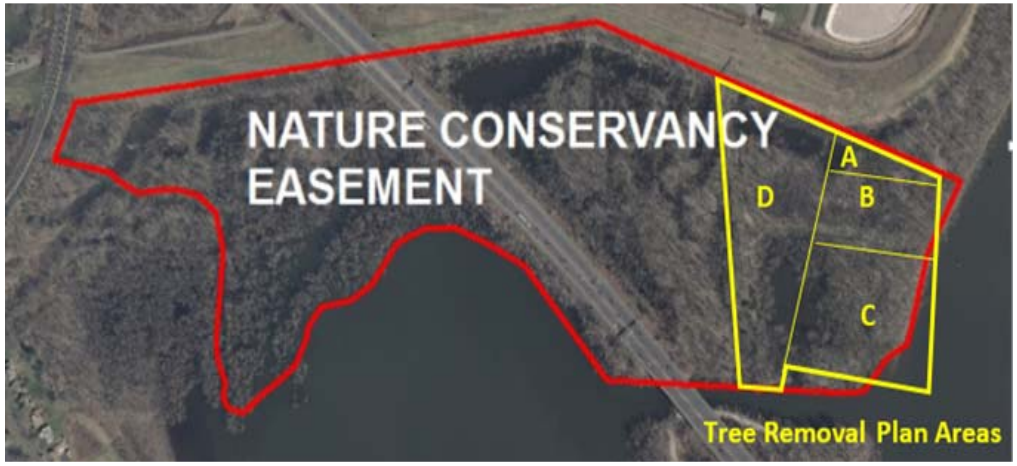
*Bald Eagle*

*Worm-eating Warbler*

# Parks and Recreation

- Avoids direct impacts to use of:
  - Folly Brook Natural Area
  - Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area
- Goal is to minimize tree removal
- Riverfront owned by City of Hartford

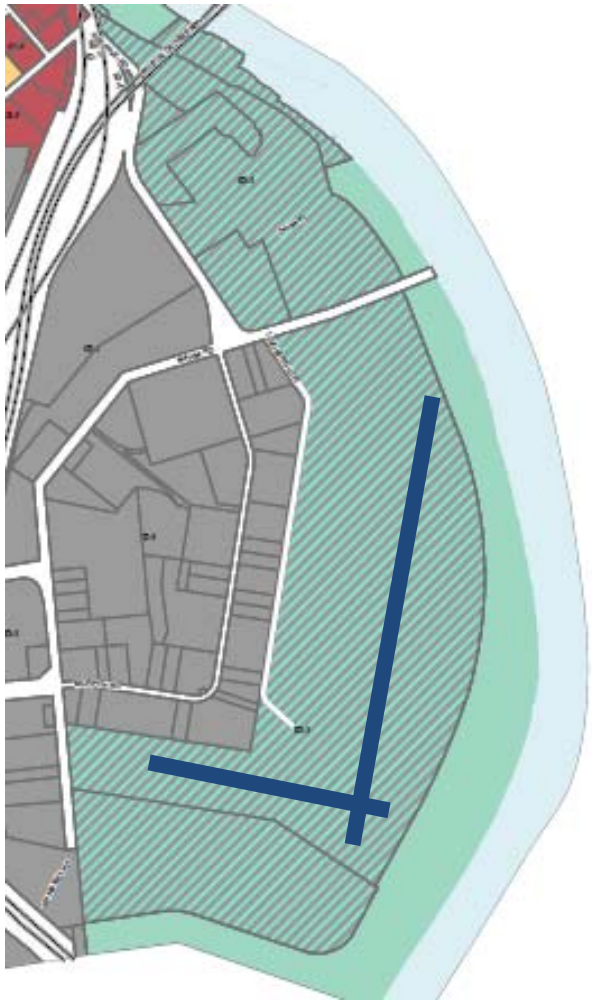



CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

# Compatible Land Use

- Airport is compatible with adjacent land use and zoning:
  - Industrial (ID-1)
  - Open Space (OS)
  - CT River Overlay
- Tree Obstruction Removal does not include any development
- Existing Open Space is retained



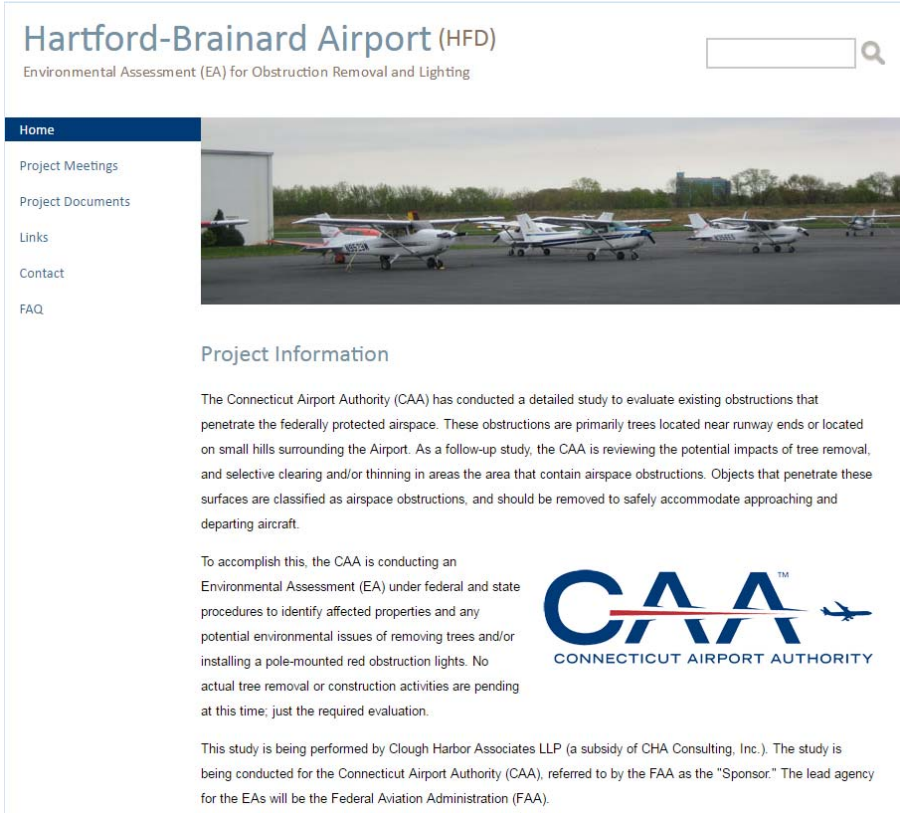
# Socio-Economic Considerations

- Project Factors:
  - Area remains open, vegetative, wooded
  - Reduced removal area
  - Mitigation (City Tree Ordinance)
- Based on these factors, no significant impacts anticipated to:
  - Air Quality or Odor
  - Climate Change
  - Public Health / asthma or respiratory illness
  - Environmental Justice (low income & minority populations)

# Study Information

*Please visit the project website at:*

[http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/](http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/)



Hartford-Brainard Airport (HFD)

Environmental Assessment (EA) for Obstruction Removal and Lighting

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Project Information

The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) has conducted a detailed study to evaluate existing obstructions that penetrate the federally protected airspace. These obstructions are primarily trees located near runway ends or located on small hills surrounding the Airport. As a follow-up study, the CAA is reviewing the potential impacts of tree removal, and selective clearing and/or thinning in areas the area that contain airspace obstructions. Objects that penetrate these surfaces are classified as airspace obstructions, and should be removed to safely accommodate approaching and departing aircraft.

To accomplish this, the CAA is conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) under federal and state procedures to identify affected properties and any potential environmental issues of removing trees and/or installing a pole-mounted red obstruction lights. No actual tree removal or construction activities are pending at this time; just the required evaluation.

This study is being performed by Clough Harbor Associates LLP (a subsidy of CHA Consulting, Inc.). The study is being conducted for the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), referred to by the FAA as the "Sponsor." The lead agency for the EAs will be the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

# Study Information

***Project EIE Notice posted on CEQ Environmental Monitor Online Portal – March 21, 2017***

http://www.ct.gov/ceq/site/default.asp

**The Following EIE Notice has been submitted for publication in this edition.**

**1. Notice of Public Hearings for Environmental Impact Evaluation and Environmental Assessment Re: Tree Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport**

**Meeting 1- Hartford:**
Tuesday, April 18, 2017
Bulkeley High School (300 Wethersfield Ave., Hartford, CT 06114)

**Meeting 2- Glastonbury:**
Wednesday, April 19, 2017
Glastonbury Town Hall, Council Chambers (2155 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033)

**Meeting 3-Wethersfield:**
Thursday, April 27, 2017
Wethersfield Town Hall (505 Silas Deane Hwy., Wethersfield, CT 06109)

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHA

# Comments?

Please provide comments by May 22, 2017 to:

Colin Goegel
Connecticut Airport Authority
334 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Suite 160
Windsor Locks, CT  06096

CGoegel@ctairports.org
http://hartfordairport.caa-analysis.com/

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

1

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Bulkeley High School
**DATE:** April 18th, 2017

| | Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| X ✓ | Jack Hale | Tree Commission | 860 371 8026 | jack.hale@comcast.net |
| X ✓ | Tim Courtney | Hartford / Connecticut Flight Club | 773 490 4253 | Tim@TimCourtney.Net |
| | Andy Hard | Hfd News | 860 296-6128 | |
| X ✓ | Charmaine Craig | Tree Commission | 860-830-9261 | treeladycharmaine@gmail.com |
| X ✓ CHERULIS | Anthony Cherulis | Resident | 860-204-2704 | acherulis@gmail.com |
| | Alden Page | Resident | 860.890.6039 | aldenemail1@gmail.com |
| | Tysha Wiggins | Pegasus Air Charter | 954-839-7948 | aviatorwiggins@gmail.com |
| | Chris Donnelly | CT DEEP | 860 424 3125 | chris.donnelly@ct.gov |
| | Lea Chayes | Windsor Conservation Comm. | 860 683 4231 | mellon171@yahoo.com |
| X ✓ | Wildaliz Bermudez | Hartford City Council | (860) 310-7975 | Wildaliz.bermudez@hartfordgov |
| X ✓ SWARR | Donna Sumner | PRAC | 860 575 4273 | SWARRDS@comcast.net |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

2

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Bulkeley High School
**DATE:** April 18th, 2017

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Heather Dionne | COH | | dionh001@hartford.gov |
| FREDD BABER | PILOT FROM AIRPORT | | FREDDBAB@GMAIL.COM |
| MICHAEL ZALESKI | RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE | 860 713 3131 | mzaleski@riverfront.org |
| Ryan O'Halloran | KNOX | 8609517694 | ryano@knoxhartford.org |
| Bob MORANDE | HARTFORD JET CTR | 860-548-9334 | Bobm@HFDJET.com |
| Naleem Kelly | UCONN/ KNOX/ KENEY | nkelly@watkinson.org | Mrs.sachakelly@gmail.com |
| David Blatt | City P+Z | 860-247-6123 | Notcoachblatt@gmail.com |
| Sara Bronin | " | 8[illegible]2 | — |
| Wendie Pdilorae | 58 Prospect St Blfd | 860-243-3604 | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

X ZALESKI ✓

X ✓

X ✓ MORANDE

X ✓ BRONIN

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

3

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** ~~Glastonbury Town Hall~~ Bulkeley high School
**DATE:** April 19th, 2017

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Janier Cuban-Hdez | Friends of Goodwin PARK | | hartfordfogp@gmail.com. |
| Jennifer Stelli | court reporter | | jmaras20@yahoo.com |
| COLIN GOEGEL | CAA | | cgoegel@ctairports.org |
| Alex Peterson | CAA | | apeterson@ctairports.org |
| SHEP DURO | HJC | | shepd@hfdjet.com. |
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# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

5/22/17

✓ WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK?

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Bulkeley High School
**DATE:** April 18th, 2017

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| x ✓ Jim Woodworth | Great Meadows Conservation Trust | | jkwoodworth5@att.net |
| Cindy Greenblatt | | | |
| Tom Baptist | City of Harford DPW | | |
| [illegible] | [illegible] Garden Club of Hartford | | |
| Kayla Angeletti | KNOX, Inc | | Kaylaa@knoxhartford.org |
| MINIKOWSKI x ✓ Andrew W. Minikowski | CT Fund for the Envt. | 203.787.0646 ex. 108 | aminikowski@ctenvironment.org |
| x ✓ Nick Wolf | — | — | lobonick@hotmail.com |
| x ✓ Alyssa Peterson | Hartford Resident | — | alyssa.peterson@att.net |
| Mark Walsh | Weth Resident | — | MARKW@EDCOENGINEERING.COM |
| Audrey Corcia D'Amato | citizen htfd.ct | 860.244.3561 | Adamato@hplct.org |
| Dominick D'Amato | " | | |

COPY

HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT PUBLIC HEARING

BULKELEY HIGH SCHOOL

300 WETHERSFIELD AVENUE

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 18, 2017

COMMENCING AT 7:14 P.M.

S P E A K E R S:

PAUL O. McDONNELL, CHA

JACKSON HARRIS, CHA

Jennifer Still, SHR, License No. SHR000301
Shea & Driscoll, LLC
30 Pepperbox Rd.
Waterford, CT 06385

JACKSON HARRIS: Good evening and welcome to the public hearing for the Hartford-Brainard Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal. My name is Jackson Harris. I'm with CHA Consulting, and I will be acting as the moderator for tonight's hearing.

At this meeting there are representatives from the Connecticut Airport Authority and the study consultant, CHA Consulting. I'd like to introduce our representatives:

We have Colin Goegel, the Senior Manager of Engineering and the Project Manager representing the Connecticut Airport Authority; and Paul McDonnell, the Senior Principal Airport Planner from CHA Consulting.

The subject environmental study is the initial step in the review of potential environmental impacts of proposed tree obstruction removal to the airspace surrounding the Hartford-Brainard Airport. All public airports have federally-defined airspace that extends outward and upward beyond each runway end. These surfaces need to be protected from penetrations, including the growth of trees, to provide for the safety of airport operations. The draft study report presents alternatives to remove trees that obstruct the existing airspace and, thus, impact the safety of the airport.

Tonight's public hearing is intended to present a summary of the proposed obstruction removal project and environmental study and to provide opportunity for the elected officials and public to provide formal testimony for the study record.

Please note that although technical comments and questions will not be addressed tonight at this hearing, all comments and questions will be included and addressed in the final environmental documents. Note that all presentations and comments at this hearing are being recorded and will be included in the transcript and the final study report.

This evening's agenda is simple. We have a presentation of the proposed action and initial findings from CHA Consulting and then public comments.

Please hold all testimony until the presentation is completed. At the conclusion, the public will have the opportunity to provide comments and questions. If you wish to speak, please, sign up at the door at the sign-in form at the door. And if you have not yet signed in and would like to speak, please, do so now on what was located over there. In order to give everyone who wishes an opportunity to speak, statements will be limited to three minutes per speaker. Any additional comments or testimony you wish to provide may be

submitted in writing or at other scheduled hearings. Anyone who requires Spanish language assistance, please, indicate that now by raising your hand. All right. And we do have a translator here tonight.

Now, at this time Paul McDonnell of CHA will present on the proposed action and environmental findings.

MR. McDONNELL: Thank you, Jackson.

My presentation's about 20 minutes or so. We want to spend most of the time tonight collecting additional comments. Tonight we do have a stenographer as well, so we're going to ask everyone to speak into the microphone which we will provide for you so that we can record all your comments accurately.

This is the first of three hearings we're holding. We're holding one tomorrow night as well, and also next week we have a third final public hearing. The subject of the presentation will be identical at all three hearings.

The project background is pretty simple. All airports throughout the U.S. have to do tree obstruction removal on a regular basis; and our background is to do the initial study, to do both the environmental assessment and environmental impact evaluation for tree obstruction removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport.

1 That's the only subject of our meeting and the only
2 subject of the study report we're dealing with. There's
3 no project development involved, just the tree
4 obstruction removal.
5 The study satisfies both the NEPA process, the
6 Federal Environmental Policy Act as well as the state
7 CEPA act. The document we put together is a joint
8 document for both environmental organizations.
9 At the first hearing, I did get the impression
10 that the general public felt we were further along in
11 the study process and in the removal process than we
12 were. I put this slide in there for that purpose. It's
13 not an easy thing just to do anything that's federally
14 regulated and requires the permits. It's quite an
15 involved process, even the removal of trees. I broke it
16 down into three general categories.
17 The first category is where we are now. It's
18 preparing the initial study. We're in the first part
19 right now where, as I say, here we are now and we're
20 collecting comments.
21 After this process, we'll finalize our initial
22 study. Only at that point do you move to the more
23 detailed process of permitting and design actions. We
24 don't get to have easements or approvals to do to
25 clearing yet. That comes down after this presentation,

after the process with the FDA is complete. We'll be looking for grievant property owners. We will be doing additional surveys of trees; and at that point, that's where we get into the details of the actual design of the removal and the permits that are required.

We know that we got many comments of looking for more involved analysis. That is going to happen before any trees can be removed, but that detailed analysis doesn't happen until after this process during the permitting phase.

If that is successfully completed, the last phase of the process would be implementation, and that's the part where the actual removal is put out to bid and a contractor would be hired to do the removals and implement those environmental permits. So we have this as a slide, and it's in the handout so you can see that process and compare it to the comments we've made.

A little bit of background about the airport. The airport's a public-use airport. There are 10 general aviation public-use airports throughout Connecticut. Hartford-Brainard is just one of the 10. It's classified as a regional airport by the FAA. They classify general aviation airports. The smallest ones are called "basic." Then from there little larger airports are called "local airports." Brainard is

1 considered a regional facility important for all of the
2 Hartford and the greater capitol area. And the largest
3 airports are classified as national ones. It supports
4 all types of noncommercial activity.
5 The airport is federally obligated, just like a
6 federal road or highway. It's funded by the FAA even
7 though it's owned and operated at the state level, but
8 all the requirements the airport must follow are those
9 federal requirements. It does support over 100 based
10 aircraft with about 50,000 annual takeoffs and landings.
11 There are over 100 jobs; and a study of a couple years
12 back by the state did an economic evaluation and found
13 that Brainard generates over $40 million in annual
14 economic activity.
15 That's just a little background. It's not
16 specific to the removal project at hand, but we do get a
17 lot of questions on why Brainard Airport and why it was
18 important, so this is our slide on saying -- answering
19 that question.
20 Airspace does get a little complicated. We're
21 going to try to keep it as simple as possible. Now,
22 aviation and airports and airspace is all regulated only
23 at the federal level. States, cities, and
24 municipalities do not get to regulate and define
25 airspace services. The FAA and the Congress ahead of

them had decided that it needed to be done at the federal level so that level of safety and standards that are applied are the same at every public-use airport throughout the country. So we don't get to choose, but we do get the requirements to do the implementation of safety improvements.

Now, we talk about two different types of services. The first is the federal aviation regulations or FAR Part 77. Those are the more outreaching surfaces. They surround the entire airport in all directions.

A little less stringent standards are what's called the "FAA Airport Design Standards." And they go beyond the end of each runway, but they're not quite as encompassing. We'll talk a little bit more about these because they're applicable to the proposed project.

We tried to boil them down into a simple graph. The graph is on the bottom there. It's a profile view, if you were standing on the ground looking at the runway and looking at the approach where the airplanes are coming in and out.

The Part 77 surfaces are more encompassing because they start out past the end of the runway and they can be flatter. At Brainard Airport the primary approach from the south has a relatively flat approach.

It's a 34 to 1, which means that that surface starts beyond the end of the runway and goes up 1 foot for each 34 feet it goes out. And that surface is shown here in blue, Part 77. You can see it's a flatter surface. And the airport is surrounded by a flood-control levee. That surface penetrates the levee itself, so it's own levee is an obstruction to the airspace regulated by Part 77.

The surfaces we're going to talk more about at this meeting are the FAA Design Standards because that's what we're recommending clearing. That's shown here in pink or the purple. The slope starts a little bit down the runway so it doesn't -- it starts closer in or further from the trees; and it also has a steeper angle, a 20 to 1 angle. You can see that the levee does not penetrate that 20 to 1 surface. Everything we're recommending is about the 20 to 1 surface, the Design Standards.

Take a look at the illustration. What we've done is, to simplify things, we've combined the tree clearing areas into one location -- into one illustration. And this diagram -- this points to the north. It's towards the left. This is the north side. There's the north arrow. And we are off the slide in the city of Hartford. This is the southern end towards

1 Wethersfield, and this is going -- so everything you see
2 shaded here with the yellow hatching is the proposed
3 tree clearing area; and if we combine all that area up,
4 it's approximately 40 acres of area mostly along the
5 Connecticut River.
6 The Purpose and Need statement is a formal
7 statement that's included in the environmental document;
8 and it's intended to be the single statement of why
9 we're doing this project. If there are going to be some
10 environmental impacts, the FAA or the federal government
11 needs a statement as to, well, Why would we do that?
12 And it's pretty simple for this project. It's to
13 improve airport safety by removing the tree obstructions
14 beyond the end of the runway. That's all this project
15 is. It doesn't have any other improvements to the
16 airport, and we're really focusing on the airport Design
17 Standards.
18 So the need is to comply with those federal
19 requirements. Again, as I said earlier, it's all at the
20 federal level. The State of Connecticut and local
21 municipalities don't get to come up with their own
22 standards. We're required to follow the federal ones.
23 So that's kind of our last statement. It's about safety
24 and it's about requirements.
25 Looking at the photo here, this is looking

south; so we're looking from the city of Hartford down towards Wethersfield. And you can see, if you look closely, this is the flood levee and the dike that's around the airport. I'm just highlighting now. And then the trees south of the dike and levee tower up now above that levee condition; so they're going 10, 20, 30, even up to 50 feet higher than the levee in locations. These trees have all been cleared in the past. Back in probably before 1990 that area was cleared out, and they've grown back. So that's what this project is about.

There's three alternatives discussed in the report, and that's a requirement by the federal government to look at various options. We kept that simple as well. We at least try and keep it simple.

But the first alternative is to do nothing and try to explain why. The FAA won't even allow that to be a selective alternative.

On the other side of the coin is to remove all tree penetrations to any of the surfaces. That would be the Part 77 removal. We're not recommending that alternative either.

The last alternative is intended to be a compromise. We are only looking to remove trees to those federal Design Standards. We spoke with the FAA

about this multiple times. They insisted that you can minimize the project but you have to still follow those federal design standards to the absolute minimum.

Getting to the illustration, I'm showing again the Part 77 is the blue surface; and the pink surface is the steeper Design Standards surface. You've got some tall trees penetrating both surfaces, including the Design Standards surface. That's the trees that would have to be removed. Smaller trees that are only penetrating the Part 77 surface, that's a tree that could be retained.

So that's going to be our goal as we move to the next phase of the project is to look into further details on what can be retained and what is too tall to be kept in place.

If you look -- there were many comments we got at the previous meeting about the City of Hartford Tree Ordinance; and we agree with those comments that the tree ordinance that's in place right now in the city is applicable to this project. That tree ordinance not only includes private development which is -- the main focus of any ordinance is private development. But it also includes tree removal to public property and for public projects. So we did also talk with the FAA about that tree ordinance as well, and they feel that -- they

agree that since it's in place and it's important for the City of Hartford to protect trees that that ordinance is also applicable to this project. That ordinance includes the requirement to do mitigation of tree removal, which may include replanting somewhere else in this case or paying into a fund that does that type of mitigation somewhere into a pool of projects.

So we don't have any details on that. Again, that would come after any permitting process but we as -- as the project moves forward, we'd be working with the City to implement the standards included in the City's Tree Ordinance.

We've also started to look at where we could trim the project back. Again, working with the FAA, this is the alternative that's in the report now; and it includes removal beyond each end of the runway and a few other areas between the runways and adjacent to those final approaches. Working with the FAA and listening to comments that we've gotten already from the public and at the first meeting, we've been able to trim it back about 25 percent in area; so this is a modified alternative. This is a proposed reduction, still to the same alternative.

As I toggle back and forth, you can see some of where we've cut out. Anywhere that's not within that

pink lines we've removed from the recommendations. So that's intended to be scaled back to just the absolute critical trees even though from a pure aeronautical standpoint, there's a benefit to clearing more than you're seeing here; but with that alone it's about a 25 percent reduction. This still -- the largest area is still on the south side of the airport, this area here; and there may be a potential to reduce that even further but not before we do some additional surveying. Those trees have grown very fast from -- since the last time they were removed, and the data that we have for them is now several years old. So we were thinking about, Could we scale that back?

And the answer is, Maybe. We'll have to look to the next phase before we get permits if further areas could be reduced.

Talking about tree removal methods, there is some other consideration when we're trying to reduce impact. There's lots of ways to remove trees. To boil it down just to three broad categories (a) being standard clear cutting and removal of all the tree material, removing stumps out -- full clearing and stump removal and grading. This is the type of clearing you would do when you're going to have a development project. There's never going to be trees again.

1 Nothing of this nature or this method is being
2 recommended and hasn't been recommended for this
3 project. No development is involved.
4 Removal with retaining the undergrowth and
5 retaining the stumps may be recommended in some of these
6 areas depending on the tree heights and types. And what
7 happens there is the area remains completely vegetated.
8 It's not cleared and developed, and the trees will come
9 right back; and that is what has happened in the past.
10 When you remove them -- this is a tree removal project
11 from 2009. These are the exact same areas. This is one
12 year after the removal, and this is another five years
13 later when trees are coming back. That area was mostly
14 cut with no grading, or removal of the brush had
15 occurred. So Hartford-Brainard has done this in the
16 past, and you can see the outcome of the area is you'd
17 never know it was cleared since the growth of the last
18 30 years.
19 What we are -- think we're going to recommend
20 more in the next phase is what we sometimes call
21 "selective thinning" where the tallest trees are removed
22 but the small trees and all the low-growing vegetation
23 is retained; and we do this type of approach when
24 there's wetlands and floodplains. Being along the
25 river, much of the primary area to be removed is wetland

1 and is also in the floodplain of the Connecticut River.
2 So based on our past experience working with the
3 permitting authorities, this selective thinning where
4 the tall trees are down and the small ones remain is
5 what we expect we're going to do most; and it is
6 recommended.
7 This is a photo of a different airport project
8 in 2013. This area is all wetland now, and this is the
9 after shot where all the tall trees were removed. And
10 various locations, some of them -- all of them were
11 removed, and some of them hardly any of them were
12 removed. And that was based on the distance from the
13 runway. So this is the type of planning expected in the
14 next phase of the project.
15 The environmental considerations -- we had lots
16 of comments that our answers and our details were not
17 sufficient; and we do agree with that because we haven't
18 done those details and answers yet. That, again, comes
19 in the permitting phase. The point of this study in
20 itself is really the screening level to determine, well,
21 could you even get a permit for this type of project and
22 what types of analysis needs to be done at the next
23 level of effort? So, really, I'm just going to the
24 screen about some of the issues that we do anticipate to
25 be of substance for this project. Wetlands and

1 floodplains will be the biggest ones.
2 Almost all airports in Connecticut have
3 wetlands. Some airports in Connecticut have
4 floodplains, and most of the area that we're interested
5 in removing the obstructions from have both. What that
6 means is that the removal will have to be done under
7 state wetland permit and may also require a federal
8 wetland permit, and we'll have some significant efforts
9 to get the state-required soil erosion control permit.
10 We'll be very concerned about protecting the riverbank,
11 protecting it from erosion, and protecting it from
12 sediment, and from washout into the river itself. So
13 there are lots of controls that would be necessary
14 during the project and that permit for those erosion
15 controls have to be maintained until all the vegetation
16 and any of the removal area damaged has been mitigated
17 and regrown.
18 So this is nothing new for state projects. Just
19 like on the highway or other building projects, you need
20 to have those erosion controls. It's specifically
21 important along a river or a stream like the Connecticut
22 River.
23 Threatened and Endangered Species -- we got many
24 comments on the bald eagle. There is a bald eagle along
25 the Connecticut River, and there is a known nest near

1 the project site. It's not -- the nest that's known
2 right now is not within the removal area, but it is
3 close by; and by the time the project is moving forward,
4 we don't know where the nest will be at that point.
5 This subject can't be ignored. The state would be
6 working with the DEEP on any permitting and mitigation
7 necessary for the -- certainly, for the -- at least that
8 mitigation will include restrictions on the time of the
9 year of clearing. We'd be looking for a number of
10 months that the birds that are there that are sensitive
11 are not breeding, are not migrating; and usually our
12 target date might be winter or late fall or early
13 spring. But based on the species assessment that we'll
14 update at the time, we'll be looking for the seasonal
15 restrictions.
16 The state DEEP may also require detailed
17 biological surveys, such as the location of the nest at
18 that time; and there will be restrictions placed on the
19 removal based on that. So the eagle issue and other
20 endangered species will not be ignored as the project
21 moves forward.
22 We did also get comments on some of the natural
23 areas along the river, the Folly Brook nature preserve
24 is within the project area; and we did get comments on
25 access to the river and recreational. And we don't see

1 any direct impacts to the use of the area or removal of
2 any activities that go on on the site; but we did want
3 to point out that some of the removal area is certainly,
4 in fact, in the Folly Brook nature area. We're trying
5 to highlight here. The area in yellow is just south of
6 the main runway; and those areas -- A, B, C, D -- are an
7 existing easement that the City has over the nature
8 conservancy so that the City could maintain the trees in
9 that area to protect the airport. The City was once the
10 owner of the airport. So that easement is placed in the
11 Folly Brook Natural Area. The removal that the state
12 seems to be doing now would be consistent with that
13 existing easement, which basically says you're
14 restricted to locations shown -- A, B, C, and D -- and
15 it talks about only removing trees that you document are
16 necessary for safety. So that is the plan. No limits
17 on access. There's no impact to any trails in there.
18 There's no impact if improvements were to be made for
19 recreational use along the river's edge. The state
20 doesn't own any of the property that's along the river's
21 edge outbound of the flood control levee, so no
22 restrictions would be placed on the use of that
23 property.
24 Compatible land use came up as well. There is
25 new zoning in place for the City. The airport is zoned

industrial, but the removal areas are zoned by the City as open space. Zoning and zoning regulations, however, we don't feel are -- have a significant impact on the project because we're not proposing any development of any type as far as the project; but the removal areas are listed -- are located in open space along the river, and that landings would stay in place after the project is done.

Socio-Economic Conditions -- this came up in a lot of comments at the first public meeting and in writing. We talked to the FAA, the lead agency, in depth about these issues and what their experience is. And their take on it was that with the mitigations that you plan -- including the areas after removal, is all going to remain open, it's going to remain vegetated and wooded -- with the reduction of the removal area and with satisfying the requirements of the Hartford Tree Ordinance as further mitigation, that from the federal standpoint socio-economic impacts would not be considered significant by the FAA. So that's a conclusion that we are keeping in the study, that air quality -- climate change is always a concern everywhere -- public health, asthma, environmental justice -- these are all socio-economic issues that were brought up. And we still feel that the nature of this

1 project is not an impact to socio-economic concerns.
2 It's primarily an ecological impact of permitting
3 process.
4 That's really the end of the technical
5 presentation. I just have a couple of slides to
6 highlight that we are still collecting comments, and we
7 have many opportunities to do that. We do have a
8 project website. The website address is on your
9 handout. It's right there. We've been getting many
10 comments directly by e-mail through that website. That
11 seems to be working very well.
12 I said this is the first of three hearings. The
13 locations of the next two hearings are listed
14 here: tomorrow in Glastonbury, next week in
15 Wethersfield. If you attended the Wethersfield meeting,
16 it's the same location as we had the first meeting of
17 this.
18 We did put the announcement in four newspapers,
19 including Spanish speaking; and we did publicly
20 publicize it on the Connecticut Environmental Monitor.
21 Last but not least -- this is the last
22 slide -- we've extended the comment period to May 22nd,
23 so you have plenty of time to get comments in.
24 This is Colin Goegel; he's here. This is his
25 address, if you prefer to send them in the mail; and

1 this is his e-mail address. On the comment
2 card -- we're doing a similar project in Groton Airport
3 and -- but the address -- it shows Groton on the comment
4 card. Use this address here for e-mailing and this
5 website where you can get the document. The draft
6 document is available in PDF format on that website.
7 And with that, that's the end of our
8 presentation. I'm going to turn it back over to
9 Jackson. Jackson, again, is going to read names of the
10 people who are interested in talking. With a
11 milti-level facility here, what we're going to do is we
12 have two handheld mikes. I'm going to have one of them
13 in my mind for this side of the room; and Molly is going
14 to have another mike on the other side of the room so we
15 can come to you to take your statements. Speak clearly.
16 Jackson will give you some final instructions; and,
17 again, we do have a stenographer recording your
18 testimony.
19 JACKSON HARRIS: Thank you, Paul.
20 So we will now commence with the public
21 testimony. So if you have not yet signed up to speak
22 and would like to, please, do so now.
23 So the public comment process goes this way: So
24 you will -- we'll bring the microphone to you, as Paul
25 just mentioned, since we have sort of a multi-level

layout here. If there are any elected officials, representatives in here that would like to speak, they'll be called first. We'll be limiting comments to three minutes; and once all participants have had a chance to speak that wish to, anybody who would like to speak again who didn't have that opportunity -- please, limit the comments to the proposed tree obstruction removal study. If you are here representing a specific organization, please, say so at the beginning. Once everyone's had the opportunity to speak, those wishing to again will have the opportunity to do so; and all of these comments will become a part of the formal hearing record, and they will be published in the final document.

The comments will be reviewed by the Connecticut Airport Authority and by the Federal Aviation Administration and considered during preparation of the final study document. No responses will be provided tonight at this hearing; however, all comments will be recorded and reviewed by the appropriate professionals, including the hearing record, and addressed and considered in the final document.

And written comments, as Paul mentioned, may be provided via the study website, at the meeting in the comment boxes we have located on the table up there, or

1 mailed directly to the CAA by May 22nd. And the web
2 address, e-mail address, and physical address are
3 provided on the hearing handout.
4 So I will now begin calling the names if there's
5 any elected officials who signed up and then followed by
6 the general public to provide comments and testimony.
7 If there's any elected officials here that would
8 like to speak, just raise your hand. All right.
9 WILDALIZ BERMUDEZ: Hi. Good evening. My name
10 is Wildaliz Bermudez, and I'm a longtime Hartford
11 resident, been here all my life. I live at 6 Atwood
12 Street. I am here also as an elected official. I serve
13 on the Hartford Court of Common Council, and I'm a
14 minority leader of the Working Families Party.
15 So thank you for the presentation. It's very
16 important that the public, all of us, hear this
17 information. I think that there should be many other
18 presentations as well; and I certainly invite you guys
19 to present for the Environmental Committee for our city
20 council. I think that would be important.
21 So listening to the presentation that you
22 provided us with, I -- there are many concerns that I
23 have on a personal level. I sit on the City Council
24 Environmental Committee myself. There are four
25 other -- there are three other members. They're not

here tonight, but we have had concerns -- conversations about this proposal, and there are many concerns that have been expressed.

So the first one being, of course, that there's over 2,600 mature trees that are at stake here and 40 acres that will be cleared; and that's very alarming. That's a large amount and certainly a lot of acres that we're talking about. And at the city level, while you did point out that there -- you know, we do have a tree ordinance at the city level. We do recognize that. I just wanted to go into specific details of what this means for the city and how important trees -- what do trees mean for the city of Hartford.

You know, we've invested a lot as a city to make sure that we have more green spaces between parks; and if we look at our capital improvement projects, that's another area. And we've invested in -- through our capital improvement projects and mirrored the environmental projects; so we want to make sure as a city that we put our money where our mouth is. In fact, $1 million -- upwards of $1 million has been allocated for that specific purpose and -- so when we look at our partnerships that we have established in the city with agencies like Knox who are actively working with the city to make sure that, again, we have more green

1 spaces, our goal through Knox is to have
2 plantings -- tree plantings of 2,250 trees per year. We
3 want to increase our green infrastructure. What I'm
4 calling infrastructure is truly trees.
5 Also we've invested as a city in having more
6 green programs like when we adopted One City, One Plan
7 over five- years ago, which within that plan it calls
8 for a greener city. And I can't stress greener city
9 over and over and over again.
10 But when we're talking about Hartford, we're
11 talking about a disenfranchised community, a community
12 that has one of the highest asthma rates, and a
13 community that needs to breathe cleaner air, and filled
14 with a lot of pollution as is; and we know that there's
15 a host of -- many reasons why we have pollution.
16 There's certainly a lot of traffic, there's a highway,
17 there's wind blowing. And I can go -- I can go on and
18 on on what -- how we go to where we got to. I could
19 talk about red lighting. I could talk about how there
20 are more trees in the suburbs than there are in the
21 cities. But I know that you all already know this
22 information, so I don't want to be redundant. But trees
23 are very important to us. For our children, for our
24 families, and beyond that we want a healthier community.
25 Other partners that are here present in the City

1 of Hartford -- and I'll mention Hartford
2 Hospital -- they've dedicated an entire department to
3 asthma research within the City of Hartford. They are
4 directly connected with the City of Hartford's health
5 department on asthma research because of our alarming
6 rates, because of the fact that children in
7 Hartford -- one of the main reasons why we miss school
8 is because of asthma.
9 Now, how does this all connect to trees? Well,
10 obviously, because we want to make sure that our carbon
11 emissions are curbed in the city; and, certainly, trees
12 help to reduce that and the air pollution that we have.
13 Now, you did touch upon social environmental
14 justice impact, and you mentioned it in your
15 presentation. With those impacts, let's remember that
16 trees -- these trees in particular, they stabilize the
17 banks of the Connecticut River. They help prevent soil
18 erosion, and the trees are located in protective banks.
19 When you mentioned the social environmental
20 justice impact and then right afterwards you mentioned
21 the importance of not necessarily looking at the
22 environmental justice impacts but more so the economic
23 impact, that is a personal concern to me because what
24 you're saying is the economic impact is more important
25 than social concern. And my question is -- you know, we

1 do have a city tree ordinance and in -- within that
2 ordinance, it does say that it's not just about if you
3 are to replant the trees replant "x" amount of trees,
4 but it's replanting the trees inch by inch. And this
5 does not happen overnight.
6 So in summary, you know, the Connecticut law
7 states that there's a public trust in areas of water and
8 other resources of the state; and these resources belong
9 to the people. So when you mentioned that the economic
10 impact is important to consider, what I am personally
11 hearing is that making money is going to be more
12 important than necessarily taking into consideration
13 what people's needs are. As a city our concern is to
14 make sure that we have more trees planted; and it's for
15 these reasons, for health reasons, and many other
16 reasons as well and -- so while we understand that at
17 the federal level you have expressed that there
18 are -- they set the standards and they get to control in
19 terms of what kind of standards are set, at the same
20 time, let's not forget that there are many other things
21 that are said at the federal level that we might be in
22 disagreement with. And that's why we have actions,
23 ordinances at the local level to make sure that our
24 public health and our safety is first and foremost taken
25 into account. Right now at the federal level, I can

1 make the same argument that environmental justice
2 funding is actually being cut. Right? So that's not a
3 priority anymore at the federal level; so that's why
4 it's so important at the local level to fight for things
5 that we care about. And trees is one of them.
6 MAYOR LUKE BRONIN: Good evening. I'm Luke
7 Bronin, Mayor of Hartford. I first just wanted to say
8 thank you to everybody who came out tonight.
9 Councilwoman Bermudez, thank you for your remarks just
10 now and for being here. It's really great to see this
11 group of volunteers, city commissioners, passionate
12 advocates who come out. It means a lot so thank you for
13 that. I also want to thank the airport authority for
14 coming and holding this hearing in Hartford. I was at
15 the last hearing, which was held in Wethersfield. It
16 was important to hold this meeting here. We thank you
17 for doing that. And also I appreciate the fact that
18 your presentation includes some important updates, among
19 them the recommendation that this hearing is subject to
20 the tree ordinance so that whatever is done here will
21 require appropriate mitigation, not just in that area
22 but around the city.
23 All of that said, I continue to have some very
24 significant concerns about the proposal, echoing much of
25 what Councilwoman Bermudez just said. First and

foremost, I have concerns about the ecological significance of this area. It's -- the importance that it plays as part of the riverbank, the floodplain there, as well as the role that the wooded area plays in the flood control system that this abuts.

I have concerns about the fact that we know this is a habitat for endangered species, including the bald eagle, which thankfully after many years has been making a comeback in the Connecticut River Valley. Although we don't see enough of them here in Hartford, hopefully, someday we will.

And I have concerns that, again, echo what Councilwoman Bermudez said about health, health equity, the role that trees and our urban canopy play in helping counter the effects of pollution.

I also have to say, you know, many -- I've heard you say before, I can't help but view this proposal in the bigger context, which is that we have an airport that occupies hundreds of acres of incredibly valuable strategic land on our south meadows that does not produce much direct value to the City of Hartford and -- so to continue to be home to that airport, not to get much tax revenue for it, and to lose so many -- potentially thousands of trees -- along our riverbank is a tough pill to swallow. So I would have

to express that concern.

I do appreciate the airport authority, again, holding this hearing. I appreciate the changes that have been made and the updates that have been made in the presentation. We are committed to working along with you and in partnership to make sure that we respect the needs for airport safety and air traffic safety, that we do whatever we possibly can using all the tools that we have to protect these trees and the environment in that immediate area.

So thank you, again.

JACKSON HARRIS: We'll move on to the general public comments; and, please, if I mispronounce someone's name, please, forgive me.

We'll start with Jack Hale.

JACK HALE: I'm not as limber as I was when I sat in high school auditoriums before.

I'm Jack Hale. Thank you for pronouncing my name correctly. You did a great job. I'm chair of the Hartford Tree Advisory Commission, and our job is to protect and expand and promote the urban forest in Hartford; and I'll just defer to what Councilwoman Bermudez just said about why we need to do that and leave it at that.

I want to express quite a bit of appreciation

1 for the fact that you all appeared to take seriously the
2 things that were said at the previous hearing.
3 This -- the report that you just gave is a big
4 improvement and it -- and it ticked off, point by point,
5 a number of things that we raised at that time; so thank
6 you for that. I still have a few questions, and I'm
7 hoping that we can get answers to that.
8 I noticed that in the -- in the first hearing,
9 you mentioned that the FAA, or whoever, had indicated
10 that the operations at the airport were 80-some thousand
11 each year. And in this report it's down to 50. And
12 Mr. Baptist's higher math here today suggested that
13 that's -- that number still is pretty darn hard to
14 believe. That's a 24/7 takeoff or landing every
15 12 minutes. I've been at that airport a bunch of times,
16 and I've never seen anything that resembled that kind of
17 frequency. I mean, I've seen that frequency in -- over
18 an hour or something like that, but I find it hard to
19 believe that could be sustained throughout the year and
20 day and night; so that's worth checking. I don't know.
21 I just -- you got a report with a number like that in
22 it. Unless you really believe it, it shouldn't be in
23 there.
24 The second question I had refers to that map of
25 the -- of the removal areas; and it's specifically as it

1 describes the -- the flight path for the Design
2 Standards, the one that you're proposing to use. And
3 I'm curious why -- particularly on the south entrance to
4 the airport or flight path, why it's so wide. It
5 doesn't seem -- and it -- it skews way out over the
6 river and adds a big chunk of forest to be dealt with
7 there. So if you can enlighten us on that, that would
8 be helpful.
9 Finally, although we trust everything you say
10 and everything you intend, we want to keep an eye on how
11 this process goes; so I'm curious how we can stay on top
12 of what is happening over the next couple years. That's
13 all I've got.
14 Thank you.
15 JACKSON HARRIS: Tim Courtney.
16 TIM COURTNEY: Hi. My name is Tim Courtney.
17 I'm a Hartford resident; and I'm also a member of the
18 Connecticut Flight Club, so I'm a general aviation user
19 of the Brainard Airport. That puts me in a really
20 interesting position, which is that I'm kind of in the
21 middle of these issues. I care about my community in
22 Hartford, and I care about our trees, and I care about
23 our environment and environmental justice. And, as a
24 pilot who uses the airport, I care about the safety of
25 myself and passengers and my colleagues.

1 So, first off, thank you for the effort that the
2 airport authority has put in between the last meeting in
3 Wethersfield and today. You know, as Jack and everyone
4 has said, you guys have done a lot to address the
5 concerns, the questions that were -- were raised. And
6 not to repeat anything that anyone else has already
7 said, but I do appreciate that there wasn't mention of
8 the potential opening of a recreational path there.
9 While I realize that this is primarily regarding the
10 removal process and the environmental impact it affords,
11 one potential alternative for mitigating is adding
12 something to the community that we can all use and
13 enjoy. And that would be recreational multiuse trails
14 that gives citizens access to the Riverfront, and offer
15 a connection between Wethersfield and Hartford, ability
16 to be among nature and also take in the views of the
17 city, you know, and enjoy the views of the airport as
18 well. So I hope that this project can include some
19 recommendations for that as an additional mitigating
20 factor.
21 Thank you.
22 JACKSON HARRIS: Is there a Charmaine Craig?
23 CHARMAINE CRAIG: Hi. Good evening. My name is
24 Charmaine Craig, and I'm the vice chair of the Tree
25 Advisory Commission and otherwise known as Hartford's

tree lady.

I do appreciate the attempts you made to be a little more reasonable, but I still feel a deep sadness; and I still look upon it as a bit of a massacre. And I wondered what happened in 1990, how that process went? and if that example would be useable or as a -- as a template for what you're going to do now in the future and I do -- I keep looking at "no significant impact." And I circled it, and it keeps jumping up at me because even if you look at the fact that trees are in that area it does affect -- the removal will affect the entire community because when you remove a mature tree that's 40 or 50 feet tall it takes years for it to -- the replacement to get to the height, and for the sequestration of CO2, etc.

So I see -- still see a disconnect; and, hopefully, with these open -- this open process and transparency, we will be able to work along with the CAC and the city to make sure our needs are properly addressed and if we can kind of work together in a harmonious way to achieve a fair and equitable result.

Thank you.

JACKSON HARRIS: Anthony Cherolis.

ANTHONY CHEROLIS: Hi. I'm Anthony Cherolis. I'm a resident of Hartford. I live in the South End of

1 Hartford, South Green neighborhood, specifically
2 involved with the South Green NRZ and -- so this is in
3 my neighborhood.
4 What I am -- what I see here is this is an
5 existing environmental and social justice issue in the
6 disconnect of the entire South End from Hartford's
7 Riverfront with the trashed energy plant which has
8 significant impacts on our neighborhood environment in
9 Hartford and East Hartford with the exhaust from that
10 facility. The airport which I also think can and should
11 be an economic driver if done correctly but I -- it'd be
12 hard pressed if you serve a Hartford resident to if they
13 even knew it was there because it is so isolated from
14 those residents and it isolates them from the
15 Riverfront, a significant portion of the Riverfront.
16 The N B C Water treatment facility is also in
17 that line of I'd say the sequestration of the Riverfront
18 from anybody accessing it and the MDC road that has a
19 gate closed on the Wethersfield side. So the removal of
20 the trees is -- is something that worries me. The New
21 York Times article with the 41 percent asthma rate in
22 Hartford just -- would blow everyone's mind. When I
23 work with teens and youths and they gasp coming up one
24 flight of stairs to my offices, it really comes home.
25 So the longtime effects on the climate and the air

1 quality from both existing and future impacts are
2 something that need our attention and not at the FAA
3 level of interest and what they consider an impact.
4 This is a local project, and I expect local engagement
5 on what those impacts are and what the current level
6 mitigation is.
7 I do agree that the access to the river front is
8 a concern as well, and the dike presents a very ripe
9 opportunity to connect to the existing Riverfront path
10 both from a recreational/transportation prospective; and
11 a lot of other places do it. For some reason we haven't
12 here.
13 So the environmental justice impacts are
14 existing and it sounds like on-going; so I really do
15 challenge our local officials and those that can become
16 engaged in this and influence beyond this public
17 statement to do so and ensure that Hartford doesn't have
18 further negative impacts.
19 MR. JACKSON: Donna Swarr.
20 DONNA SWARR: Donna Swarr, Hartford resident,
21 Parks and Rec Advisory Commissioner.
22 I have to admit I did not attend the first
23 meeting, but what I heard from people was pretty scary.
24 Trees are extremely important in Hartford. Yes, asthma
25 is a huge issue. I have asthma. I live in the South

End; and, I guess, I count on all those trees to clean the air for me.

What I look at with this little -- page 10 and these trees, retaining trees of a certain height and removing trees over a certain height -- maybe I'm extremely ignorant. But why wouldn't you plant trees that you know that wouldn't grow passed that height after you clear it? Maybe -- I don't know what kind of trees those are. Maybe those aren't desirable for the area, but I think that should be looked into to mitigate future problems.

The recreational aspect clearly is something that I would like to see; but if there's no trees, I'm not so sure it would look very nice. I'm not so sure it would be that enjoyable. I'm not so sure it would be a respite for our residents. I would love to see Riverfront extended.

I also want you to know that I am a supporter of the airport. My father was a pilot. During World War II, he was a mechanic for airplanes. My son was in the Civil Air Patrol and attended, say, the section that met at the airport; and later he got his airport -- got his license to fly.

I also believe that it is part of the national security plan, and I respect that.

1 I also understand that you're in a floodplain,
2 and messing with any dikes or -- doesn't make any sense
3 especially since ours are -- haven't been managed very
4 well.
5 I listened to, of course, everyone's input and
6 they -- I'll be honest with you. You know, Jake Hale
7 and Charmaine are far more knowledgeable than I am; and
8 they certainly are worthy of being listened to. And
9 they attended earlier sessions and have a greater, I'll
10 say, depth of knowledge. And one of the points that
11 Jack made I feel very strongly about: I would like to
12 see someone as an overseer from the City of Hartford to
13 make sure this project doesn't run amok.
14 Thank you.
15 JACKSON HARRIS: Michael Zaleski.
16 MICHAEL ZALESKI: Good evening. My name is Mike
17 Zaleski. I'm the director of Riverfront Recapture.
18 Riverfront Recapture is a nonprofit organization that
19 manages four parks along the Connecticut River: three
20 in Hartford and one in East Hartford. And it's -- our
21 mission is to connect people to the Connecticut River,
22 so it's my pleasure to be here tonight to speak on
23 behalf of the organization and express some concerns.
24 I had prepared remarks. However, there appear
25 to have been significant changes or at least modest to

1 significant changes to the proposal. I guess I'm
2 wondering how those get incorporated into the original
3 study, whether we'll see these slides incorporated into
4 a larger document. That would put a lot of people at
5 ease.
6 As I mentioned, I prepared remarks; but it seems
7 like the proposal has changed a bit and that there's a
8 lot of attention being given to some of the comments
9 that were provided at earlier hearings.
10 I want to just stress that the river is used for
11 a variety of different purposes. And, while we
12 certainly recognize the importance of pilot safety and
13 the importance of the airport, there are multiple
14 different constituencies along the Connecticut River;
15 and I think it's important for the Connecticut Airport
16 Authority to recognize those constituencies as well.
17 There are two excursion boats that leave out of one of
18 our parks and do a significant amount of business along
19 the river. The aesthetics to the Connecticut River are
20 important for a variety of different reasons.
21 A number of people have also mentioned the
22 ecology and the habitat that exists along the
23 Connecticut River, both in the water and on the
24 Riverfront bank. I think it's important that that
25 continues to be stressed as -- as this process will be

1 moving forward.
2 I -- I've only been with the organization for
3 two years. I've been in the region for a while. But
4 people within my organization remember several decades
5 ago when the area was clearcut. Joe Marfuggi, my
6 predecessor who was with the organization for almost
7 three decades, distinctly remembers the scar that was
8 left on the Connecticut riverbank. So I think it's
9 important as we move forward -- and it appears that this
10 project may move forward in some fashion -- that we
11 continue to listen to the concerns of all the different
12 groups that use both the Connecticut River and the
13 Connecticut Riverfront.
14 Thank you.
15 JACKSON HARRIS: Ryan O'Halloran.
16 RYAN O'HALLORAN: I'm Ryan O'Halloran. I'm the
17 Advancement and Marketing Director at KNOX, Inc., which
18 plants 500 to 1,000 trees a year in the City of Hartford
19 as well as a great variety of other things I would be
20 happy to tell you about at a later date.
21 Obviously, there have been significance changes
22 made; and in line with that, I have a few questions to
23 ask, which after tonight still remain on the list.
24 The first of which is, in a letter I've already
25 written to the Connecticut Airport Authority, I

1 recommended that they honestly kill the draft and start
2 over again basically. And it seems like they haven't
3 done that, but they've gotten to the point where this is
4 going to be an entirely new environmental impact
5 assessment. And in such ways that I would think that
6 the public should have the right to review another draft
7 of the actual environmental impact assessment which is
8 going to be attached to various permits and things like
9 that because what we're talking about tonight is what is
10 actually in the document that's been provided. So that
11 that -- I think we do continue to talk about this prior
12 to calling this a final document. And I know that I'm
13 fortunate for the Connecticut Airport Authority. I'm
14 fortunate for the FAA. But, at the end of the day, what
15 we're talking about tonight is not the document that
16 everybody here has glanced through or spent hours
17 studying.
18 And the second thing that came up tonight, which
19 is just kind of mind blowing to a guy in Hartford, is
20 that the FAA has any opinions or expertise on
21 environmental justice and -- so I applaud the
22 Connecticut Airport Authority for working with the FAA
23 on these issues and trying to represent Hartford. At
24 the same time I hope (a) somebody from the FAA will
25 become directly engaged with Hartford -- i.e., with

1 Hartford residents -- and (b) they involve the EPA while
2 it still stands because I think that they offer the
3 experts on this, that there are experts in Hartford in
4 this, including Dr. Mitchell. But from the national
5 level, it makes no sense to me that the FAA should get
6 to decide on the definition and implementation of the
7 environmental justice issues.
8 So, unfortunately, even though a revised draft
9 was distributed, I think the letter I submitted, I think
10 in February, still stands and we -- we do hope that
11 there is some middle ground on this. I think the
12 Connecticut Airport Authority and their representatives
13 have made solid progress in terms of listening to the
14 community but whether -- there needs to be proof that
15 there's going to be follow-up on this.
16 So thank you for everybody for continuing to
17 follow this.
18 JACKSON HARRIS: Bob Morande.
19 ROBERT MORANDE: Hi. I am Bob Morande. I'm one
20 of the owners of Hartford Jet Center at Brainard
21 Airport. I started flying out of Hartford-Brainard
22 Airport in 1964. I'm a U.S. Navy veteran, and I got all
23 my training under the GI bill. And some of you know me.
24 I was in the car business for many years as Morande
25 Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, Acura.

1 But when I sold all my businesses, I saw an
2 opportunity to get back involved in Hartford-Brainard
3 Airport and help grow it. My partner and I have been
4 trying to get the mayor to come down -- I see he was
5 here but he's gone -- because we're trying to put
6 together a group for the whole area to develop the
7 airport; and we're putting together a scholarship
8 program right now for young, inner city kids to learn
9 how to fly. And I've been quoted on a number of
10 occasions. There's a major shortage of pilots
11 throughout the whole United States; for that matter, the
12 whole world. And there's also a major shortage of
13 mechanics around the United States -- aircraft
14 mechanics. We've got a beautiful school down at the end
15 of the airport. We have been trying to invite more and
16 more Hartford city residents to come down to the
17 airport. We've got a big event coming up in June. It's
18 called the "Rib Off." Cyril, which is my general
19 manager -- I could let him tell you a little bit about
20 it.
21 But as far as the tree situation is concerned,
22 we all have concerns about that. And one of the
23 gentleman -- he made a comment that he doesn't believe
24 there's 50,000 takeoffs and landings. All he's got to
25 do is go up to the control tower. They click off every

single takeoff and every single landing; and I believe it's a lot more than 50,000. Our goal is to get it up to 100,000. And the unfortunate thing -- I just got a thing on my phone from WFSB a plane crashed in East Windsor. Hit a tree. Killed two people. Tonight while we've been here.

Now as far as this situation, I've heard nothing but negative about the trees. I've got a simple question and -- because I've been at the airport, as I said, since 1964. The MDC is doing a tremendous amount of construction down the far end of Runway 11. There are a ton of trees there. They're not there anymore. I'm confused. I know there's a city ordinance. But was that city ordinance followed? Was there any concern? I've never heard one word about all the trees. I've been driving down there for years. I've been in -- as I said, since 1964. One of the key things that a lot of people don't understand about Hartford-Brainard, it's been there -- we're coming up on our 96th anniversary this year. Four more years and we'll be 100 years. We're one of the only regional airports in a capitol city in the whole United States, and we have got tremendous history in that airport. Our plan ultimately is we want to build a museum there to show all the Hartford residents and the state residents what

1 Brainard -- what the history of Brainard Airport has
2 been all about. The first parachutes that were used in
3 World War II, set right here at Brainard. It was a
4 female that jumped out of a plane with -- when -- I
5 can't remember her name, but it doesn't make any
6 difference. It was set during World War II. But you
7 would have had Charles Lindbergh there that landed
8 there. That's why it's Lindbergh Drive.
9 But, anyway, I just want to let everybody know
10 that this airport has been there for years and years.
11 There's been a small group of people that have been
12 trying to close the airport because they think they can
13 build other things there; but we do bring a lot of
14 revenue into the region, and it's over $40 million. And
15 I believe it's higher than that. And one of the other
16 good things, we have a lot of hospitals in that area;
17 and there's a lot of transplants that are brought into
18 Hartford-Brainard Airport. It's a lot closer to get to
19 Hartford Hospital, UCONN, St. Francis than it is to go
20 to Bradley. And we have air ambulances that come in
21 there. As a matter of fact, we have a charter company
22 that we have an air ambulance set up; and I'm picking up
23 another plane next week that's pressurized that will be
24 able to do a lot of air ambulance into the City of
25 Hartford.

1 But we need support, and we need a lot more
2 people working with us because we're trying to develop
3 the South End of Hartford and the airport by training
4 more students to learn how to fly, to get good paying
5 jobs. The technical school down the end of the
6 airport -- all of these young folks not even done with
7 graduation, Pratt & Whitney scoffs them right up
8 in-between semesters. Bombardier and all the aircraft
9 manufacturers in the State of Connecticut because there
10 is such a severe shortage. All these young folks and
11 young boys and gals that are learning how to fly, they
12 get their commercial license. They get scoffed up. As
13 a matter of fact, some of the airlines now are starting
14 some of their own schools because there's such a
15 shortage.
16 But we have got to get this tree situation
17 because it is a dangerous situation. I don't
18 know -- there's a couple pilots here. But we have one
19 instrument landing system that comes into Hartford with
20 bad weather. Well, it's specifically designed by the
21 FAA to avoid going over Old Wethersfield, so it comes in
22 at an angle and then turns into the runway. Well, where
23 it turns are where the highest trees are; so I know what
24 the CAA wants to do with the FAA, but I sit -- I'm down
25 at that airport every day, and it just hurts me to see

1 the opposition from a lot of people that don't even
2 understand what this airport is all about. The mayor
3 says there's no money coming in. He hasn't checked his
4 records. Every business at that airport pays a lot in
5 property taxes, including me. All the
6 airplanes -- there's a lot of revenue that comes in,
7 plus all of these corporate jets come in to Travelers
8 and all the other places. They spend money. They stay
9 at the hotels in town. They go shopping in town. They
10 use restaurants. So when people say there's no economic
11 impact from Hartford-Brainard Airport, they are wrong
12 because they haven't done their homework.
13 Thank you.
14 JACKSON HARRIS: Sara Bronin.
15 SARA BRONIN: Thanks. I wanted to echo the
16 comments that other people have made about thanking the
17 airport authority and its consultants for incorporating
18 some of the points that were made earlier. Some of the
19 points were made at the prior meeting that a lot of us
20 attended and also had spoke at. Among those that were
21 positive surprises to me were that the project area was
22 reduced by 25 percent or the total scope was reduced by
23 25 percent and also -- let me look at my notes -- and
24 also the acknowledgement about the tree ordinance and
25 the corrections about Hartford zoning. So all of that

1 was good.
2 I've already heard comments on the record and
3 also I wanted to acknowledge a fellow commissioner of
4 the planning and zoning commission, Commissioner Blatt,
5 behind me who along with other commissioners for the
6 planning and zoning commission also submitted formal
7 comments for the record.
8 Like others Ryan O'Halloran and other have said,
9 some of our comments have become obsolete. Others are
10 still relevant. So, you know, I wanted to continue to
11 echo concerns about environmental justice, in particular
12 the issues -- you know, the point that continues to be
13 made in this presentation and in the last presentation
14 is that there are no significant effects to
15 environmental justice community. I think, you know,
16 certainly, there will be; and I think that just has to
17 be acknowledged. If it's something that is at least
18 acknowledged, you know, we can figure out a way to work
19 around it.
20 You know, it -- it's also, you know -- and I
21 know that Luke -- Mayor Bronin also wanted to
22 acknowledge the staff that's here -- so Tom Baptist and
23 Heather Dionne -- in their role in administering the
24 tree ordinance because if -- if this is allowed to
25 proceed, I mean, there's a lot of potential opportunity

1 for trees to be planted in other parts of the city, not
2 the great trees that we have but -- that we have now
3 that might be cut down as a result of this proposal but,
4 you know, a large number of trees that could potentially
5 be organized into a -- in a way that actually benefits
6 the city where we desperately need trees.
7 So I guess one comment I would have tonight
8 is: Now that you guys have acknowledged the tree
9 ordinance exists and if there, you know -- there is some
10 ability for this project to proceed at all, you know,
11 I'd like to see in the environmental impact statement
12 some idea or some assessment of what those mitigation
13 measures might be in a pretty specific way because I
14 think you guys have the tools to do that at this stage.
15 So I want to see, you know, what kind of opportunities
16 there might be for other parts of the city where you
17 would be required to plant those trees pursuant to the
18 tree ordinance.
19 I also wanted to echo the comments asked for us
20 to review another draft of this, if possible.
21 And just to respond to Tony Cherolis' comment as
22 well, you know, What are we doing about this more
23 globally? For those of you who don't know, the City of
24 Hartford is embarked by the climate effort that's
25 evolved by many of the people here including KNOX,

1 including the tree commission, and others; and that
2 effort is contained or -- or depicted in an online
3 website at www.hartford.gov/climate and -- so I think
4 this issue, you know, is just one of the many issues
5 that the city is trying to, you know, work through as
6 advocates to the commission through its staff to try to
7 address and -- so for those of you who want to get
8 involved more heavily, hartford.gov/climate is a way to
9 do that and hopefully make that impact a little bit more
10 effective as the wider range of issues.
11 So I think that's it for me, and I appreciate
12 again what you've done so far but remain concerned
13 still.
14 JACKSON HARRIS: Jim Woodworth.
15 JIM WOODWORTH: Thank you for having this. I'm
16 sorry. I live in Wethersfield. Jim Woodworth. I live
17 in Wethersfield. I'm the stewardship chair for the
18 Great Meadows Conservation Trust. And I was out of town
19 for the Wethersfield one; so I don't really have a sense
20 of how much you incorporated, but I appreciate that.
21 In terms of opening up the river to the public,
22 we at Great Meadows Conservation Trust have walks,
23 including even ones that -- in the winter which we walk
24 into the Folly Brook nature area. We own a property
25 that's on the backside of the cove behind Hartford

Avenue, and we own a couple properties coincidentally that are on the east side of the river and near Maps Areas 5 and 7. We are proud too that the Audubon Society recently named the Great Meadows as an important bird area and heard about the stopover on the flyway of the birds that travel a thousand miles to get here, refuel, and go another thousand miles to the arctic and using the Connecticut River as a flyway or a highway.

I was here -- I was around in 1990 when the DOT cut all those trees down. Then they stopped cutting. They were told to stop. Then they floated in the river. Got a letter published in the Hartford Courant compliment the DOT on installing speed bumps in the river; so things have changed, and they're for the better, I hope, in how they're going to manage the -- I think I would say -- the unfortunately named tree removal.

Alicea Charamut who's the lower river steward with the Connecticut River Conservancy and I snowshoed up over the dike on the north side; and it was interesting because what we found there was almost no underscoring and a field of stumps that were maybe a couple of feet wide with sprouts coming up each side. And the sprouts are probably 25 feet tall. So, true, you're removing mature trees. It's going to grow back

1 if you don't change the species level; and that's why
2 I'm so pleased the Connecticut -- the city ordinance
3 that says mitigation. In other words, we're not just
4 removing trees. We are doing what urban foresters do,
5 which is to put the right tree species in the right
6 place; for example, the black walnut species that
7 doesn't grow as tall as the cottonwood or maple or as
8 fast but still holds the river bank.
9 One of the great things -- one of the great
10 offshoots of the airports is that they have grass --
11 they remove all the trees all the way around them. They
12 have -- which turns out to be grassland habitat for
13 endangered species because there's no -- that's all
14 there is is grassland. So I think there is an
15 opportunity here to take those areas where you're going
16 to remove the tall trees and I would argue you're going
17 to do something with the ones that aren't quite as tall
18 yet they're going to be tall in five years, replace them
19 with different species, replace them with shrubs,
20 flowering shrubs, improve the habitat, an opportunity to
21 really make the habitat better. How that's going to
22 play out in terms of opening to the public, well, maybe
23 an occasional walk down there. It's not really a place
24 the public can get to very easily but still -- and when
25 you cut some of these trees down, just girdle it and

leave the -- and leave the snags tall because that's -- because habitats are started by -- with the woodpeckers and then occupied by the tree sparrows and so forth. So there's lot of ways to do this that doesn't constitute just cutting, removing.

And I just found out there last week where the water was high and there's the eagle sitting in the eagle's nest and a whole raft of herons sitting there in their new heron rookery started up in that same section to the east of 91 and just before you get to the -- where the airplanes are going to be coming down.

So -- and, by the way, I have a study from 1962 where there was a heron rookery there before they built that in 1991; and that's only come back in the last four or five years.

So I think we have a chance to enhance the habitat and do what you need for safety for the airport at the same time. I don't -- they're not mutually exclusive in my mind anyway.

Thank you so much.

JACKSON HARRIS: Andrew Minikowski.

ANDREW MINIKOWSKI: Hi. Good evening. I'm Andrew Minikowski. Tonight I'm here representing the Connecticut Fund for the Environment. We're a statewide environmental advocacy organization. If you'd like to

1 learn more about our work, feel free to talk to me after
2 the meeting.
3 I'd just like to echo the comments with everyone
4 saying "thank you" for opening the second round of
5 hearings. There's been a lot of public interest in
6 this, and I think this is very helpful to the process
7 overall. As well, thank you for the very significant
8 addition to the plan a lot of us, I believe, saw for the
9 first time tonight in response to the comments that my
10 organization and other organizations submitted in
11 regards to the Hartford Tree Ordinance, the zoning, and
12 some of the others issues that were raised. It's a step
13 in the right direction. I think more can be done.
14 In particular, I would like to echo the comments
15 that several other individuals have made that it would
16 be very helpful to see an additional draft document of
17 the environmental impact evaluation before a final
18 document is issued. Essentially, the project that we're
19 looking at now is different than the project that was
20 initially proposed due to the decrease in the actual
21 project area as well as the tree mitigation under the
22 city ordinance.
23 And, furthermore, my view on that is bolstered
24 by a rather disturbing comment during the presentation
25 that the airport authority has no duty to go into

1 specifics at this stage of the process; and that's
2 contrary to the National Environmental Policy Act and
3 the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act. That is, the
4 process it's proceeding under, I'm aware of no
5 interpretation that an agency does not have to go into a
6 concrete level of detail until the permitting phase. In
7 fact, that's the reason these laws were passed in the
8 first place so that agencies don't have to commit
9 irretrievable resources only to find environmental
10 problems would have been apparent had they gone into
11 greater depth at the first instance. So I would
12 strongly suggest -- and I think many would
13 appreciate -- if a new draft document were issued prior
14 to a final document.
15 And as many have said -- so I won't go into
16 depth again -- I do appreciate that the airport
17 authority has been coordinating with the Federal
18 Aviation Administration in greater depth. That
19 is -- that is helpful. However, many of the problems
20 here, particularly in terms of environmental justice,
21 are local problems; and greater coordination with the
22 City of Hartford, community groups, and local citizens
23 cannot hurt. It can only improve transparency of the
24 process for the better.
25 Thank you.

1 JACKSON HARRIS: Nick Wolf.
2 Thank you. I'm a native from the
3 Hartford-Springfield area. I think I've spent about
4 80 percent of my life on the Connecticut River.
5 Real quick, the first thing I would mention
6 regarding the project is that -- if you could give a
7 little more about what happens if you don't cut the
8 trees. Does the airport have to close? You know, what
9 exactly is going to go on if the trees aren't cut, and
10 what is that particular analysis?
11 The second part I would say is that my biggest
12 concern about the project is, Who will coordinate the
13 environmental impact and how will it be enforced? So
14 it's a complex environmental analysis. Who's going to
15 do it? How is it going to get paid for? You're in the
16 City of Hartford. Not a lot of money out this way. And
17 what is the enforcement of that environmental
18 analysis? because, otherwise, the way I look at it is
19 it's just a bunch of people with chainsaws cutting down
20 trees. And next thing you know, all the trees are cut
21 and, hey, I don't know. Something got -- you know so
22 who knows. And there's no money. So after the trees
23 are cut, you're broke and, hey, it's just sort of a
24 bunch of cut trees.
25 And then, finally, I would just say, you know, I

1 was just hearing the City of Hartford for this airport.
2 This gentleman stated and the mayor did come in here and
3 stated the main -- the airport doesn't really doesn't
4 pay its own way and that, you know, What would the
5 airport say regarding that particular analysis? And he
6 even floated out that there's something bigger and
7 better for that particular airport and area over the
8 airport. And if I was the airport, you know, I
9 certainly would be confused by some of that.
10 JACKSON HARRIS: Alyssa Peterson.
11 ALYSSA PETERSON: Good evening. Alyssa
12 Peterson. I'm a Hartford resident of the South End.
13 I'd like to commend this effort. This is
14 incredible what I've witnessed here. Certainly, there
15 are those of us that read the public comments. We read
16 the editorials. It was all quite alarming; so,
17 obviously, the public advocacy of many here has worked.
18 You came out. You expressed your concerns. You had
19 details. You made suggestions. And what I've seen here
20 tonight is quite a change from what was originally
21 described. So I applaud this effort, and I
22 applaud -- or ask that you keep going down this road of
23 making changes as comments and corrections are
24 suggested.
25 But I'll be honest. I came here tonight -- this

1 is a public safety matter. This is a safety matter for
2 the airport. Brainard Airport is a 100-year-old airport
3 that has been in existence, obviously; and it's been
4 under the FAA and CAA for quite sometime. And there are
5 regulations. We take federal dollars for this airport;
6 and, therefore, we have to comply with the regulations
7 because we take these federal dollars.
8 Personally, I think it's important to disclose,
9 all of us here, if we have a bias. I am bias. I think
10 this is a fantastic economic development engine for the
11 South End; and in full disclosure I have a resolution
12 before the city council to have an airport development
13 zone, similar to Groton, Waterbury, and Bradley
14 so -- and, again, this is for economic development
15 purposes.
16 So we are here about Brainard, about a safety
17 initiative, this report; and I'd like to focus on that
18 because I don't know that folks realize that in the last
19 20 or 25 years that I've been watching the city
20 government Hartford doesn't have the funds to do
21 enforcement. We don't do public safety enforcement
22 enough. We don't do zoning enforcement enough. We
23 don't do health safety enough. We just saw recently a
24 hotel -- our big convention center had a public health
25 scare. How many public safety scares have we had as

regards police? So I'm thankful that the CAA and the FAA are here to address public safety as regards Brainard because that needs to be done. You don't need any airport disaster because of trees; and then we're scarred for how long because of some crash or something. We need to focus. That needs to be addressed. We need to address it.

As regards to the trees, I'm certainly sensitive to all those who are -- that is a concern of theirs, the environmental side and whatnot; but I want to congratulate Mr. Woodworth, I think it is. I'd vote for you for anything. I think you -- in a very succinct way, you said what makes the most sense. We do have to remove these trees for safety; but we can put in native species as part of a mitigation effort following the Hartford ordinance so that there are slow-growing trees that grow back. So let's focus on the best solution possible for this public safety process. If we can combine the two, I think we're all better off.

I'd also like to advocate for -- I know there are folks from the Old Wethersfield Cove area that are concerned about increased safety -- or increased air travel. Well, it was my understanding that Brainard and the FAA and CAA came together and developed a new path so that the planes could come in and be more safe. But

1 that requires, I think, more tree cutting or a different
2 path.
3 So we all have our interests here. We have
4 economic development. We have safety. We have
5 environmental justice. We have reduction of noise and
6 bothering neighborhoods but -- so we have to come
7 together and come up with a solution; and I do believe
8 that can be had here. And I do advocate for another
9 plan. Obviously, the plan that's proposed was quite
10 different; and it would be an injustice to everyone here
11 if we did not have a revised plan and that was published
12 and we could comment on it.
13 Finally, I think it's also important -- I'd like
14 to see in the report some acknowledgment -- there are
15 political pressures at bear here, and I would like that
16 acknowledged in the report. There are political
17 pressures by significant politicians -- such as, Mayor
18 Bronin, State Senator Fonfara, MDC Chair DiBella -- to
19 close Brainard Airport. I'm grateful that at least
20 Mayor Bronin acknowledged that. There are other
21 factions that are concerned about the noise over -- that
22 the many flights bring at -- to Brainard. And there is
23 the Meadows and the Wethersfield Cove folks. There are
24 the tree factions. So I want to make sure that the
25 public comments being put in and that the letters being

1 put in disclose, Who are these political factions and
2 what they support? And I want the final report to
3 acknowledge, Do any of them have anything to do with
4 public safety and the safety aspect of this project? It
5 is a public safety project. So I just want to make sure
6 that the report discloses all of that and deals with
7 that, puts those issues to rest relative to what we
8 are -- our task is here.
9 And, again, I would really like to thank all of
10 you for the work you've done. I'd like to thank
11 everyone here who's made comments and you -- obviously,
12 public input works, and you should be all proud. This
13 is going to be, I think, a very good project that meets
14 all of our needs: safety for the pilots, safety for
15 Hartford, and, certainly, some more attractive tree
16 growth.
17 Thank you very much.
18 JACKSON HARRIS: All right. This concludes the
19 formal part of the hearing. Again, if you'd like to
20 submit further comments, you can provide them to the
21 website, the address above, or on the physical comment
22 form. You can either place them in the box here at the
23 exit or send it by mail to the CAA office.
24 Thank you for coming out and have a great
25 evening.

1 (The hearing was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.)
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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 STATE OF CONNECTICUT:

3 COUNTY OF HARTFORD:

4 I, Jennifer Still, Licensed Shorthand Reporter and

5 Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified, do

6 hereby certify that the preceding testimony was reduced

7 to writing by me; and that it is a true record of the

8 testimony given.

9 I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel

10 for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties to

11 the action in which this deposition is taken, and

12 further that I am not a relative or employee of any

13 attorney employed by the parties thereto or financially

14 interested in the action.

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my

16 hand this 22nd day of May, 2017, at Plainfield, Connecticut.

17

18

19

20 _____
Jennifer Still
Licensed Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public

21 My Commission Expires August 31, 2020
License No. 0000301

22

23

24

25

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

~~MAY 22, 2017~~

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Glastonbury Town Hall
**DATE:** April 19th, 2017

✓ WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMENT?

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ✓x NOREEN CULLEN | Citizen | | ✓ |
| Sally Harold | The Nature Conservancy | | |
| Betty Schmitt | Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. | | |
| ✓x Bob MORANDO | HARTFORD JET CTR | | |
| Gail White | GMCT | | |
| Deb Greeden | GMCT | | |
| Steven Schroeder | GMCT | | |
| ✓ Andrew W. Minikowski | CT fund for the Environment | 203.787.0646 ex.105 | aminikowski@ctenvironment.org |
| Michael Lawlor | not affiliated | | |
| William M. Duffed | — — | 860-250-2189 | |
| R.F. ~~DiBecca~~ DiBECCA | TOWN OF GLASTONBURY | 860 982-5064 | ROBERTodibecca@GLASTONBURY-CT.GOV |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Glastonbury Town Hall
**DATE:** April 19th, 2017

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lindsey Rutka | | | LRutka@vanhorst.com |
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COPY

HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT PUBLIC HEARING

GLASTONBURY TOWN HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

2155 MAIN STREET

GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 19, 2017

COMMENCING AT 7:05 P.M.

S P E A K E R S:

PAUL O. McDONNELL, CHA

JACKSON HARRIS, CHA

Jennifer Still, SHR, License No. SHR000301
Shea & Driscoll, LLC
30 Pepperbox Rd.
Waterford, CT 06385

1 **********

2 MR. HARRIS: Good evening and welcome to the

3 public hearing for the Hartford-Brainard Airport

4 Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact

5 Evaluation for Obstruction Removal. My name is Jackson

6 Harris from CHA Consulting. I will be acting as the

7 moderator for tonight's hearing.

8 At this meeting, we have representatives from

9 the Connecticut Airport Authority and the study

10 consultant, CHA Consulting, so I'd like to introduce:

11 We have Robert Bruno from the Connecticut

12 Airport Authority and Paul McDonnell, the Senior

13 Principal Airport Planner from CHA Consulting.

14 The subject environmental study is the initial

15 step in the review of potential environmental impacts

16 for proposed tree obstruction removal to the airspace

17 surrounding the Hartford-Brainard Airport. All public

18 airports have federally-defined airspace that extends

19 outward and upward beyond each runway end. These

20 surfaces need to be protected from penetrations,

21 including the growth of trees, to provide for the safety

22 of airport operations. The draft study report presents

23 alternatives to remove trees that obstruct the existing

24 airspace and, thus, impact the safety of the airport.

25 Tonight's public hearing is intended to present

a summary of the proposed obstruction removal project and environmental study and to provide an opportunity for the elected officials and the public to provide formal testimony for the study record.

Please note that although technical comments and questions will not be addressed at tonight's hearing, all comments and questions will be included and addressed in the final documents. Note that all presentations and comments at this hearing are being recorded and will be included in the transcript of the final study report.

This evening's agenda will simply be a presentation of the proposed action and initial findings by the consultant and then public comments.

Please hold all testimony until the presentation is completed. At the conclusion, the public will have the opportunity to provide comments and questions. If you wish to speak, there is a sign-up form by the door. If you have not yet -- if you would like to speak and have not signed in as of yet, please, do so now. Statements will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Any additional comments or testimony you wish to provide may be submitted in writing or at other scheduled hearings.

At this time Paul McDonnell of CHA will present

the proposed action and environmental findings.

MR. McDONNELL: I'll go over briefly the project background. This is a simple effort in that the entire purpose of the meeting is to discuss the environmental assessment and the environmental impact evaluation for tree removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport. It's a single-subject project and document.

The purpose of the study and these meetings are to satisfy both the Federal and National Environmental Policy Act as well as the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

We could tell at some of the earlier meetings that we've had for the tree clearing needed statewide that some of the public got the impression that we are further along in the process and that the tree clearing was eminent. That's really not the case. We're actually at the very early stages of the process. Before anything can be done, there's really three steps to the process. I've just informally divided them here into A, B, and C. We're still in Stage A where we're still preparing the draft study and we're collecting comments. That's where we are now.

After we're done with our hearings and our comment period, we will release a final environmental statement. Only at that point do we go to the next step

in the process, which is the permitting and the approval process.

At that point we will be working with property owners in securing agreements, doing additional survey work, and doing the detailed plans and permitting that's required to address environmental considerations.

After that process and the permits are issued for the removal, then implementation could happen. The project would be publicly bid and awarded, and then the project could implement to the actual removal of the trees and maintenance of the permits that are associated.

There's a timeline up on the screen. This is all informal at this point, but that's a tentative idea, that we're in spring of 2017. And we would expect 2019 might be the implementation time frame.

So Project Background, a little bit about the airport -- we have gotten several comments about the use of the airport, so we just have one slide indicating a little bit more. If you're not one of the users of the airport, it is a public-use regional airport. It's important to both the FAA and the state. The FAA classifies general aviation airports into four categories. The lowest is a basic airport. A step up from that are called "localized" -- "local airports."

1 Hartford-Brainard is a step above that as a regional
2 facility. And the highest step for a general aviation
3 airport is the national criteria.
4 So the airport is important at both federal and
5 state levels. It supports all types of noncommercial
6 activity, nonscheduled airline services; and it is
7 federally obligated to the term that's the -- similar to
8 such as a federal highway. It is that it's owned and
9 operated at the federal and state level, maintained at
10 the state level, and obligated to serve the general
11 public.
12 The airport does have over 100 based aircraft;
13 approximately 50,000 annual operations based on the
14 counts that are done at the air traffic control tower;
15 over 100 local jobs; and a study of a couple years back
16 with jobs and businesses at the airport they estimate
17 over $40 million of annual economic activity for the
18 airport.
19 Airspace and Design Standards, this is the
20 technical portion of our presentation where we're
21 explaining why we're doing what is in the EA. We talk
22 about two different types of penetrations or
23 obstructions. You hear us use that term. One is to the
24 federal airspace regulations, which comes under Part 77
25 as a term we see in airport studies and reports. And

you also see the term "FAA Design Standards."

Part 77 surfaces are larger. They can be flatter. They extend in all directions around the runways.

The Design Standards are usually smaller and more finite in terms of their reach, and we address both of them in the environmental document. One graphic to show you what they look like -- if you could, picture the profile view of a runway, looking at it from standing next to the runway. At Hartford-Brainard the runway -- the main runway is called "Runway 220." And this might be an image looking towards the south from the city towards Wethersfield. If you're familiar with the airport, there is a flood control levee that surrounds three sides of the airport. And to the south the Part 77 airspace is so flat that the levee itself is a penetration to that surface. As that Part 77 surface is flatter, more penetrations. It also starts beyond the end of the runway.

Compared to the FAA Design Standards, the slope is steeper at 21 to 1; and it starts with landing point of the runway. It starts further back. So the blue surface is the more stringent Part 77 surface, and the pink surface is the steeper Design Standards surface. That's about as technical as we get in the presentation.

Here's an overview of the airport. There's two runways, which means there's four runway ends. There are tree obstructions to all four runway ends. The most obstructions are to the south. This is the main runway. North is towards the left of this imagine; so here we're in the City of Hartford, Wethersfield, East Hartford, and Glastonbury.

All along the river -- the river is dark in this photo. This is the Connecticut River. There are tall trees right along the levee, so we have most of the tree penetration is right along the levee along the river's edge.

Every environmental study has a Purpose and Need statement. It's supposed to be short and identify what's the key issue involved. Here is a -- as you already know, it's to improve safety by removing tree penetrations to the airport. It's purely a safety project. There's no additional development of any type proposed as a part of this effort, and the need is simply to comply with the federal airspace and design criteria.

These criteria are federally designated. States and localities and cities do not get a say on what these criteria should be. Congress has made it so that they want every airport in the country that's open to the

1 public to follow these same regulations; so it's
2 required to address the safety deficiencies, is our
3 simple statement.
4 This photo is an airplane sitting on the runway
5 at Hartford-Brainard going towards the south, and you
6 can see in the South End you can see the flood control
7 levee; and then above the flood control levee, you can
8 see the tree obstructions that have grown over the
9 years. So that's why we need to improve the safety
10 there. This aircraft taking off needs to climb quickly
11 and above all the trees that you see there. Same on the
12 landing. They need to land over those trees and then
13 down the runway.
14 The report goes through three sets of
15 alternatives. Federal documents often have various
16 alternatives for comparison purposes. We tried to keep
17 it very simple in that we looked at a no-action
18 alternative. That's self-explanatory. What if we do
19 nothing? And we've already explained that based on
20 federal criteria, we can't pick that as the
21 recommendation.
22 The full obstruction alternative is about -- is
23 the other end of the spectrum. What if we cleared every
24 penetration defined at the federal level? So that would
25 be more far reaching of an alternative.

1 And, not surprisingly, we've been working with
2 the FAA. We've been talking with community leaders as
3 well and holding these meeting. And what we're calling
4 the "modified obstruction alternative" is what we're
5 recommending. And what that does is it focuses
6 on -- it's removing the Design Standards penetrations.
7 That's the minimum amount that the federal government
8 tells us we must address.
9 Back to my illustration here, again, this is the
10 Part 77, the more far reaching surfaces; and we can see
11 the tall trees. Not only do they penetrate the tallest
12 trees there, but they also penetrate even the shorter
13 trees would be common. The surface we're planning on
14 addressing is just the Design Standards surface, the
15 pink surface; so there's still certainly tree
16 penetration that needs to be addressed. But there are
17 trees and underbrush and other growth that we hope will
18 be able to remain in place. So that's the overall
19 picture that we're trying to portray for this project.
20 We have been informed and been discussing the
21 tree ordinance that is in place in the City of Hartford;
22 and we acknowledge that this tree ordinance does affect
23 not only private development of the city. It also
24 impacts and addresses public property and public
25 projects, so the tree ordinance does -- it affects this

1 project, and we'll be working with the city to meet the
2 requirements of the ordinance.
3 As part of the ordinance requirements,
4 mitigation for tree removal is included. Mitigation
5 could include paying into the fund that plants trees
6 elsewhere or doing re-plantings elsewhere for this
7 project or on site. And that is yet to be decided but
8 is something we'll look into, if we get to the next
9 stage of the project.
10 We've also been following the comments and
11 questions we've been getting. State agencies as well as
12 the general public have asked CAA to minimize the
13 clearing area to the extent possible.
14 This is the image that's online right now. It
15 shows approximately 40 acres of shaded area. Those
16 shaded areas are the target locations for clearing; and
17 working with the FAA over the last month, we've been
18 able to trim some of the removal area.
19 And the next slide that's in your handout, you
20 can see -- I'm just toggling back and forth. We've been
21 able to cut out about 25 percent of the project area;
22 and we've trimmed in-between the approach areas on the
23 outsides of the approach areas.
24 Within those pink lines, those Design Standards
25 surfaces, the tree removal is still the target of the

project.

The area to the south, the pink area, is quite wide. That's because there -- we're required to remove trees to that straight-in surface to the runway; but the FAA has also set up a noise-mitigation surface that comes over the river out in this direction, and that widens the removal area.

Tree Clearing Methods, we talked about some tree clearing methods in the report already. You could boil them down into three basic criteria -- or three basic methods that you often see in projects.

Full clearing with stump removal and grading is not recommended at any location for this project. These photos show that type of removal where you're planning on building a facility or you're planning a permanent grass or field and trees will never grow again as part of that type of removal. So that's not recommended.

There may be some locations where most of the trees are cleared, but we're not going to be doing any grading or stump removal; so those trees would ultimately grow back. That's what happened in the -- in clearing at this airport in the past. A couple of dozen years ago there was some significant clearing completed; and those trees have all grown back to the way they are now.

1 This is an airport project where we did some
2 clearing in 2010. This is the before. These are all
3 the same locations, 2011, where all the trees were
4 removed with no stumps, no grading, no grinding. And
5 the trees came back, which you can see. In 2016,
6 there's a decent amount of regrowth. This gets about a
7 20-year design life on a project before you have to
8 maintain the area and do some additional clearing.
9 For Hartford-Brainard we think the mass majority
10 of the clearing areas will probably be what we call
11 "selective removal" where the tall trees will be removed
12 and the small trees and tall underbrush will be
13 retained. We often do this for airport projects that
14 are located in wetlands and floodplains. As these trees
15 are located primarily in wetlands and floodplains being
16 right along the river, it is very likely that we'll do
17 this type of selective removal.
18 The photos here are a sample from a different
19 FAA-funded project. This was all wetland area, and this
20 is the after picture. You can see some areas were
21 virtually clearcut; but, in most of the wet areas, the
22 tall trees were removed and all the short trees were
23 retained. This was done with federal and state wetland
24 permits and was monitored and watched during the
25 construction process. So this is -- this is an approach

1 that we do recommend for the project, Hartford-Brainard.
2 Most of the environmental document goes through
3 the federal environmental criteria, and this is just a
4 list alphabetically of the various criteria we look at.
5 We highlighted the ones that were of more significance
6 to this particular project. So just going quickly
7 through some of them: Floodplains and wetlands, we
8 think that's one of the biggest concerns for this
9 project. And because of that, the project will need to
10 work closely with the Connecticut DEEP; and permits are
11 a definite requirement. There will certainly be a state
12 wetland permit requirement. There may also be a federal
13 wetland permit requirement as well as significant
14 actions and approvals for soil erosion control being
15 along the river and for water quality protection. So
16 those, for the most part, are managed through the DEEP
17 and would be obtained and worked through, negotiated,
18 and designed with DEEP, hand in hand, during the next
19 stage of the process.
20 Endangered and Threatened Species, we have lots
21 of endangered and threatened species throughout the
22 state. One that's of interest here for Brainard Airport
23 is the bald eagle. There is a bald eagle nest right now
24 that is near the project site. It is not in the
25 clearing area, but these things move around. And the

1 eagles are coming back, so it's definitely something
2 that we're watching.
3 Before the project would be advanced, we expect
4 to need to work with DEEP to potentially do some
5 biological surveys for species of concern. We expect
6 seasonal restrictions on any removals to avoid migration
7 seasons and hatching seasons; and, again, any
8 coordination might also be necessary with the Fish and
9 Wildlife Service. So that would occur at the next stage
10 of the process as well.
11 Parks and Recreation is somewhat of a concern.
12 The property of the clearing is not airport property.
13 It's all off the airport property. It's mostly in the
14 City of Hartford and some in Wethersfield, and there are
15 several protected areas -- the Folly Brook Natural Area,
16 Keeney Cove Marsh -- and the Nature Conservancy manages
17 most of these properties.
18 The project itself will not eliminate, take, or
19 modify the use of the properties; but it does include
20 tree removal within these areas, for sure.
21 You really can't see the airport, but the runway
22 is right here. And this is south. This is in the town
23 of Wethersfield, and the Nature Conservancy operates
24 this property under a long-term lease agreement. When
25 that went into place, the City of Hartford put

1 an easement in effect so the City of Hartford could
2 protect the runway approaches at Hartford -- at
3 Hartford-Brainard Airport; and that easement included
4 Areas A, B, C, and D and had regulations on what you can
5 remove and what you can't. It came about through that
6 you had to document what trees were penetrating the
7 surfaces; and, if so, removal was acceptable under the
8 easement. With the CAA in place now, the same type of
9 removal would be consistent with this easement that
10 dates back several decades.
11 Compatible Land Use, the city has zoned some
12 changes over the last years. The tree removal area is
13 in a zoning district for open space. The airport is in
14 an industrial district. We don't think that the zoning
15 will have a substantial impact in this project because
16 there's no development planned. Zoning is mostly
17 related to planned developments. The tree removal
18 areas, again, are in the open space; and if the removals
19 take place, the airport property -- that property will
20 still be open space. But it is city property and
21 Wethersfield property, so working with those
22 municipalities will be part of that process.
23 Socio-Economic Considerations, we've gotten lots
24 of comments on this. We know that from these comments
25 that asthma and health concerns are an issue in the City

1 of Hartford and that minority and lower-income
2 populations are present in the City of Hartford. We've
3 talked to the federal agencies about that subject and
4 how this project might affect them; and with tree
5 clearing -- you know, there's also some effect on tree
6 clearing; but based on the characteristics that the area
7 remains opened, vegetated, and wooded, that we've
8 reduced some of the mitigation, some of the removal
9 area, and also the potential consideration of the tree
10 ordinance, we think those socio-economic concerns are
11 quite minimum here. The federal term is "significant."
12 By the federal terminology, if you cross a certain
13 threshold, then your project is significant. Working
14 with the FAA, the lead agency on this, they don't feel
15 that this type of project, with the mitigations in
16 place, would have a significant impact on socio-economic
17 issues. So that's what it says in the report now.
18 And I believe that is the last of the slides
19 here, so we're going to -- I'm going to wrap it up; and
20 the main focus of tonight is really to collect comments.
21 We do have a website set up just for this study. The
22 address is on the screen. It's also in your handout
23 there. There is an e-mail address. You can send
24 comments right through the website. There's also a
25 mailing address. You can mail in comments, and you can

1 also download, print, and view the draft report that's
2 online right now.
3 Study Information, we tried to go the extra mile
4 with advertising this meeting. We did advertise in the
5 Connecticut Environmental Monitor. Municipalities asked
6 us to hold formalized public hearings. This is the
7 second of three formalized hearings we're having. The
8 third and last meeting is next week in Wethersfield. We
9 did advertise in four publications on three separate
10 days, including a Spanish language newspaper.
11 And just to wrap up the presentation is that
12 we'd like to ask everyone to send comments in by
13 May 22nd. That's a substantial increase in the comment
14 period for this effort. And, again, you can e-mail them
15 right to CAA, Colin Goegel; and here is the address.
16 That's also in the handout. So it's all in your
17 handout. We did provide comment forms as well at the
18 door. If you'd like, you can write a comment or slip it
19 right in the box; or you can also fold that and drop it
20 in the mail.
21 And, with that, I'm going to turn the
22 presentation back to the moderator; and we'll get close
23 towards the period for public comments.
24 MR. HARRIS: All right. Thank you, Paul.
25 So we will now begin with public testimony. So

if you have not yet signed up to speak and would like to, please, do so now with the forms in the back. The process will go as follows:

Please come forward to the podium. Actually, we're going to bring it -- we're going to bring a microphone to you, so raise your hand. When your name is called, restate your name for the record. Elected officials and representatives will be called first. Comments will be limited to 3 minutes; and once all participants have had the opportunity to speak, anyone who wishes to speak again will then be given the opportunity to do so. Please limit comments to the proposed tree obstruction removal study. If you're representing a specific organization, please, state so. Once everyone has had the opportunity to speak, those wishing to do so again will have the opportunity. Please remember that all comments will become a part of the formal hearing record and they will be published in the final document. They will be reviewed by the Connecticut Airport Authority and the Federal Aviation Administration and considered during preparation of the final study document. Please note that no responses will be provided tonight at this hearing; rather, all comments will be recorded, reviewed by the appropriate professionals, included in the hearing record, and

1 addressed and considered in the final document. And
2 written comments may be provided via the website, at
3 this meeting in the comment box in the back, or directly
4 to the CAA until May 22nd. Web address, e-mail, and
5 physical address are provided in your meeting handout.
6 I'll now begin calling the names of elected
7 officials follow by the general public to provide
8 comments; and, please, forgive me if I mispronounce your
9 name.
10 And are there any public officials here tonight?
11 If so, raise your hand.
12 All right. We will start with Noreen Cullen.
13 NOREEN CULLEN: My name is Noreen Cullen. I
14 live here in Glastonbury, and I've been a resident of
15 Connecticut all my life. And I wonder what it would
16 cost for us to get a group that would push back against
17 this expensive presentation here.
18 Many of us in Connecticut don't trust the
19 organizations that are supposed to be protecting the
20 trees. Whether it be the state, Eversource, and CL&P
21 have gone through, United Illuminating, torn down trees
22 all over our state that have nothing to do with electric
23 wires. It's very difficult to trust anybody who says,
24 Well, we'll just take down the necessary trees. And you
25 have to ask yourself, Maybe it's the runways that are

the problem and not the trees.

What you're calling obstruction is actually the watershed to the Connecticut River, which we've had a terrible time getting clean. The children who live in the City of Hartford need every tree they can find. It's a habitat, nature conservancy property. The reason it's nature conservancy property is because there are species who call that home who need to live here and I -- I think the trees are losing, and that means that the citizens are losing. Certainly, the wild creatures are. And I can't imagine that with endangered species in there we're not going to look for alternatives of shutting down a runway or whatever we have to do to protect the habitat and the trees in there. And it's a buffer for the people who live nearby, and I think that we should be looking for other alternatives.

Thank you.

MR. HARRIS: Bob Morande.

ROBERT MORANDE: Hi. I am Bob Morande. I'm part owner of the Hartford Jet Center at Hartford-Brainard Airport. I'm also a Glastonbury High School graduate, 1960 and -- right here.

I started flying out of Hartford-Brainard in 1964; and on the GI bill -- I'm a Navy veteran -- I started flying there when there weren't any trees there.

It was the dike. It's become a major safety issue right now; and, if any of you have ever been to the airport -- and some of you know the airport. It's going to be 96 years old today. It's one of the only capitol city airports in the whole United States. We do a lot of pilot training there, mechanic training, etc.

We're not trying to take a lot of trees down. As I said, years ago there weren't any trees there, and they've grown; and as the study showed, they culled them and cleared them out. And they've all grown back, and they'll continue to grow back; but we have to cut them down.

Hartford is used by all the major insurance companies, all the hospitals for air ambulance. It is a regional airport; and we have to be very, very cautious of safety issues. And I know this lady said, you know, concerned about wildlife, etc., etc., which is true. But, as the report says, there's going to be a lot of work done to try to protect the wildlife. And I've made issues about the fact the eagle is there because -- well, Mayor Luke Bronin, for example, last night -- he's all for closing the airport down, but it's been there for 96 years.

And all of the permit process that the state, the CAA and the FAA have to go through back to the City

of Hartford saying they have an ordinance. But yet I look down the other end on the other runway and I see the MDC building, this big huge water plant. And they're taking down hundreds and hundreds of trees. I'd like to see the permit for that. I'm very concerned about that because it bothers me because we're training a lot of young people to learn how to fly. The United States has a major, major shortage of pilots -- qualified pilots and qualified mechanic; and Hartford-Brainard is one of the only areas in the State of Connecticut that does training and one of the only states in the country that has no college prep program for aviation, one of the few states in the country. And we have been trying to work with various colleges to see if we can get something set up. We've got a program starting this summer. We're going to present some scholarship programs. We're going to try to bring a lot of inner city kids. Got a couple people from Glastonbury we're teaching how to fly as well.

But, anyway, my three minutes is up.

MR. HARRIS: Andrew Minikowski.

ANDREW MINIKOWSKI: I'll be very brief. Andrew Minikowski. I'm here representing the Connecticut Fund for the Environment. We're a statewide environmental advocacy organization.

1 We already have a ton of comments on the record,
2 so the only thing different tonight is, one of the great
3 things about the second round of hearings -- and thank
4 you, again, for holding them -- is that many of the
5 concerns folks initially addressed about Hartford's
6 municipal tree ordinance have been addressed. And I
7 think there's a real great opportunity there to
8 ameliorate a lot of the environmental impacts of this by
9 replanting the trees via the required mitigation. Right
10 tree, right place. They can be replanted and not worry
11 about obstructive airspace in the future.
12 But Glastonbury, East Hartford, Wethersfield,
13 obviously, don't have that same ordinance in their
14 communities. So if there could be any way that the
15 airport authority is going to explore working with
16 either community groups in those municipalities or those
17 municipal governments to develop similar mitigation
18 strategies to what's going on in Hartford. Without the
19 benefit of an actual ordinance, I think that would also
20 be a positive step in the right direction.
21 So thank you.
22 MR. HARRIS: All right. William Dufford.
23 WILLIAM DUFFORD: Bill Dufford, 593 Tryon
24 Street.
25 I've flown out of Brainard field about six or

eight times in my life, and I think it's very important that we keep the airport safe. Trees are a renewable resource. 100 years ago or a 116 years ago, Connecticut was clear cut. I don't know whether people realize that or not, but it was true; and trees renew themselves. And I think it's much more important to keep our air traffic safe from hitting a tree when they're taking off or coming in and keeping the airport viable.

Thank you.

MR. HARRIS: Well, at this time that wraps up the formal comment process; so, please, remember that you can submit additional comments through the web page or by e-mailing them to the e-mail address on here or by mail to the CAA. Or you can fill out a comment form located at the back of the table and either leave it in the comment box at the back of the room or submit it to the address on the back by mail.

Thank you for coming out tonight and have a wonderful evening.

(The hearing was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.)

1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 STATE OF CONNECTICUT:

3 COUNTY OF HARTFORD:

4 I, Jennifer Still, Licensed Shorthand Reporter and

5 Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified, do

6 hereby certify that the preceding testimony was reduced

7 to writing by me; and that it is a true record of the

8 testimony given.

9 I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel

10 for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties to

11 the action in which this deposition is taken, and

12 further that I am not a relative or employee of any

13 attorney employed by the parties thereto or financially

14 interested in the action.

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my

16 hand this 22nd day of May, 2017, at Plainfield, Connecticut.

17

18

19

20 _____
Jennifer Still
Licensed Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public

21 My Commission Expires August 31, 2020
License No. 0000301

22

23

24

25

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

**PROJECT:** Environmental Assessment & Environmental Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal at Hartford-Brainard Airport
**LOCATION:** Wethersfield Town Hall
**DATE:** April 27th, 2017

| Do you wish to speak | Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ✓ | SHEP DURO | PRIVAT CITIZEN | 860 869 9463 | |
| ✓ | CYRIL THAM | " " | 860 914 1449 | |
| ✓ | MICHAEL de GRUCHY | " " | 908 285 2776 | MDEGRUCH@ATT.NET |
| ✓ maybe | Farah Evenson | Resident | 860 819-5604 | Faevenson@Gmail.com |
| | Mary Sena | resident | 860 5299494 | mary.sena@sbcglobal.net |
| | Doris Stamos | Resident | 860563-6145 | mrsstamos@yahoo.com |
| ✓ maybe | Jim Stamos | Resident | 860563-6145 | |
| | Cynthia Brown | " | 860-529-0039 | cindyCT1@cox.Net |
| ✓ | Kaci White | Resident | 617.894.9634 | kaciwhite@gmail.com |
| | Tom WICKMAN | Resident | 617.733.1291 | tomwickman@gmail.com |
| | TONY MARTINO | RESIDENT | 860 563 2512 | TONYMARTINOJR@YAHOO.COM |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Please ✓ your name.
Wish to speak?

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alex Peterson | CAA | 860-292-2030 | apeterson@ctairports.org |
| Wes Largent<br>Claire St. Onge | | 860-529-7821 | |
| Dana Campbell | Hartford Audubon | 860 568 5670 | dana.L.campbell@gmail.com |
| Jason Kitchens | | 203 417 7455 | KitchensJB@Hotmail.com |
| Sharon Truex | Wethersfield resident | 860-529-3684 | struex@cox.net |
| RICHARD TRUEX | Old Wethersfield | 860 529 3694 | rtruex@prohealthmd.com |
| SUZANNE EDGARO | Old Wethers. | 860 371-1812 | spedgaro@gmail.com |
| ✓ Maria C Alfonso | Resident | 860-502-7072 | luwdoges net.net |
| Debra Cohen | Concerned resident | 860-563-5327 | debracohen51@gmail.com |
| Cindy + Howard Greenblatt | " | | |
| Amy Morrin Bello | concerned resident | | amybello@att.net |

Slide 21

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lisa Galinski | Citizen | | |
| Andrew Minikowski | CT fund for the Environment | 203.787.0646 ex. 108 | |
| Jim Woodworth | Great Meadows Corr Trust | — | — |
| Julie & Charlie Wolf | citizen | — | |
| Ken Mizuno | " | — | — |
| Rob O'Connor | Citizen | — | — |
| Jane Condron | citizen | — | |
| Melissa Wagner Pavick | citizen Hartford School Board | 860-899-9872 | melissa.pavick@hartfordschools.org |
| Martha DiTomasso | citizen of Old Wethersfield | 860-841-5353 | marthaditomasso@gmail.com |
| Tamalah Repacz | citizen | 860-574-8462 | |
| Richard Repacz | " | " " | |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gloria McLean | | 860-529-7516 | ggmcl@aol.com |
| Natalie Crafa | | | |
| Gail Fabian | | 860-563-4334 | |
| Matthew Forrest | | 860-272-3828 | |
| Jack Dolan | | 860 529-1882 | |
| Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre | Wethersfield Resident. | — | — |
| Bob Morandse | HARTFORD Jet | | |
| Betty Mendish | | | |
| Judy Keane | Obd. Weth. Resident | 860-563-3387 | jakeane@aol.com |
| Jon & Jana Colegrove | RESIDENT | 860-881-5350 | JONATHAN.COLEGROVE@GMAIL.COM |
| Mary Tante | Resident | 860-416-3849 | |

# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dan Guerra | Wethersfield Resident | | |
| Helena Reilly | Wethersfield Resident work at W-B-S | 860-712-3083 | hreilly126@gmail.com |
| Russ Moran | State Rep 28th | 860-810-8452 | russell.moran@cga.ct.gov |
| Lynn OFori | Weth. Resident | 860-918-6023 | |
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# Sign-In Sheet (Public Information Meeting)

CAA
CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Please check your name if you wish to speak :)

| Name | Affiliation | Phone Number | Email (print clearly) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kristi Pedneault | resident | 860-882-4414 | ksalters@gmail.com |
| ✓ speak Alyssa Peterson | self | 8604900895 | alyssa.peterson@att.net |
| Tom Skarbek | Resident | 8605631280 | skarbekthomas@snet.net |
| M K Jenson | Resident | 860 948 0803 | MaryKayOtter@gmail |
| Barbara Doyle | East Hartford | 860.568.9048 | barbaradoyle543@gmail |
| Jessica Martin | Resident | 413-207-1418 | Cousinjess@gmail.com |
| | | | |
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COPY

HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT PUBLIC HEARING

WETHERSFIELD TOWN HALL

505 SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY

WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 27, 2017

COMMENCING AT 7:03 P.M.

S P E A K E R S:

PAUL O. McDONNELL, CHA

STEPHANIE PARSONS, CHA

Jennifer Still, SHR, License No. SHR000301
Shea & Driscoll, LLC
30 Pepperbox Rd.
Waterford, CT 06385

1 **********

2 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Good evening everyone.
3 Welcome to the public hearing for the Hartford-Brainard
4 Airport Environmental Assessment and Environmental
5 Impact Evaluation for Obstruction Removal. My name is
6 Stephanie Parsons. I'm with CHA Consulting, and I will
7 be acting as the moderator for tonight's hearing.
8 At this meeting there are representatives from
9 the Connecticut Airport Authority and the study
10 consultant, CHA Consulting. I would like to introduce
11 the representatives:
12 Kevin Dillon, the executive director
13 representing the Connecticut Airport Authority; and Paul
14 McDonnell, Senior Principal Airport Planner from CHA
15 Consulting.
16 The subject environmental study is the initial
17 step in the review of the potential environmental
18 impacts of the proposed tree obstruction removal to the
19 airspace surrounding the Hartford-Brainard Airport. All
20 public airports have federally-defined airspace that
21 extends outward and upward beyond each runway end.
22 These surfaces need to be protected from penetrations,
23 including the growth of trees, to provide for the safety
24 of airport operations. The draft study report presents
25 alternatives to remove trees that obstruct the existing

airspace and, thus, impact the safety of the airport.

Tonight's public hearing is intended to, one, present a summary of the proposed obstruction removal project and environmental study and, two, provide an opportunity -- provide an opportunity for the elected officials and public to provide formal testimony for the study record.

Please note that although technical comments and questions will not be addressed tonight at the hearing, all comments and questions will be included and addressed in the final environmental documents. Note that all presentations and comments at this hearing are being recorded and will be included in the transcript and the final study report.

This evening's agenda will be as follows: The presentation of the proposed action and initial findings from CHA Consulting and then public comments.

Please hold all testimony until the presentation is completed. At the conclusion, the public will have the opportunity to provide comments and questions. If you would like to speak, please, sign up using the form at the door or at the table to the right. If you have not yet up to speak and wish to do so, please, sign up now. In order to give everyone who wishes an opportunity to speak, statements will be limited to

three minutes per speaker. Any additional comments or testimony you wish to provide may be submitted in writing or to the comment box.

At this time Paul McDonnell of CHA will present on the proposed action and environmental findings.

PAUL McDONNELL: Thanks, everyone, for being here.

A little bit of background of the project, pretty simple. The study we've done is the Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation for the proposed potential impacts for tree obstruction removal at the Hartford-Brainard Airport. It's a single-subject study just for the tree removal. The study that we've done satisfies requirements for the National Environmental Policy Act as well as the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

A little bit about the study background -- we've added this slide since the last time we presented here. There seemed to be a lot of questions about the process, so we've added this one in here. We're just at the beginning stages of the process. Even removing some trees takes quite a bit of effort. I've broken it down into three general components -- A, B, and C -- just for convenience. We're still here. We're still at the start. We're doing the generalized environmental study

1 looking at the big picture of what's being proposed.
2 After the study is finalized, it's then that we
3 get into the details looking at the permitting approval
4 process. The trees we're interested in clearing
5 obstructions for are not located on the airport, so
6 permission and access needs to be granted; and
7 additional surveys we're anticipating doing to make sure
8 we have the correct height of the trees. And then
9 finally the detailed plans and the detailed permits
10 start at that phase.
11 We've gotten a lot of questions about, Well, how
12 many trees are there? What's the exact limit? That
13 starts in Stage B of the process when we roll up our
14 sleeves and get into the details. Only after permits
15 are issued and approvals are in hand can the project be
16 implemented.
17 When it is implemented, it will be publicly bid
18 and awarded to a contractor. And throughout the
19 process, the CAA would be responsible for maintaining
20 the permits and seeing that the contractor meets all
21 required environmental regulations.
22 A little bit about the airport background.
23 There were some questions about that. Hartford-Brainard
24 is a general aviation airport, every type of activity
25 with the exception of commercial air service. It's one

of 10 publicly-owned, public-use, general aviation airports in the state of Connecticut. The FAA considers Hartford-Brainard a federally-obligated airport because it has taken federal grants and is regulated at the federal level, just like a U.S. highway like State U.S. 5. Standards and requirements are coming from the federal level, not from the Connecticut DOT or the Connecticut Airport Authority. The FAA considers this general aviation airport important to the state as a whole and the nation as a whole.

They have four categories of general aviation airports. The most simple one is a basic, general aviation airport. Then you move up to a local, and then you move up to a regional airport. The FAA considers Hartford-Brainard a regional airport, just one step down from an airport of national importance.

Finally, there are about 100 based aircraft at the airport. Their aircraft control tower records about 50,000 annual takeoffs and landings and training maneuvers.

There are about 100 local jobs on the airport; and a study of a few years ago -- so it's a bit dated now -- from the state Department of Transportation looked at economic revenue and generation at the airport. They estimate it to be about $40 million. So

that's just a little bit of background. This project, again, is just about the proposed tree obstruction removal.

And we do get into a little bit of technical details with airspace. Airspace is regulated at the federal level, only the federal level. The standards we're required to meet are just those. Those are the FAA. That was intentional at the federal government level. They didn't want states or cities or municipalities coming up with their own standards for clearing trees or other obstructions. And at Hartford-Brainard, just like the other airports in the state, we're required to follow those federal requirements.

We talk about two different types. Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77, you see that term a lot in airport studies; and you also see the term FAA Design Standards. Those two separate categories is what you hear us talking about with this airport and any airport.

The Part 77 standards are more far reaching. They surround the entire airport. They may be larger and lower and longer.

The Design Standards are generally simpler and less far reaching, and we go into a little bit of detail about those two with what we're recommending here at

Hartford-Brainard.

This is a profile view. We were asked maybe it would be better to explain what we're trying to do with a profile view if you're looking -- if you're standing on the ground next to the runway and you're looking out into the approach where the planes come from to land and where they depart.

The Part 77 airspace surfaces at Brainard Airport approach to the south in Wethersfield. Starts beyond the end of the runway. It's a flatter and longer surface, and you'll see the term "34 to 1" being the slope. What does that mean? For every 34 feet you go outward from the end of the runway, the surface only goes up 1 feet; so it's a pretty flat surface as to Part 77.

The Design Standards are a little less stringent. The surface is steeper, 20 to 1; and starts at the landing point of the runway.

So the purpose of our little profile view is to show that the most stringent airspace surfaces, even the levee that surrounds the airport, is penetrated by that Part 77 surface. The steeper surface doesn't have as much stringent conditions and has less tree penetrations because of that.

This is a top view. This is a photo of the

airport. Just to be clear, north -- just for convenience, I have north oriented to the left and Wethersfield -- this is Wethersfield here to the south. And the river's kind of dark in this photo, but the river is coming through here. What we're showing in yellow are trees, and those are the trees that we're recommending for clearing to meet the federal standards. The airspace is also shown. It does get a little complex where the pink lines are the 20 to 1, the Design Standards surfaces; whereas, the blue lines are the -- the pink lines are the Design Standards surface. The blue lines are the Part 77 surface. So they are similar in location when you look over top. There are a lot of lines involved with it.

This is a ground shot. The intention here is to show a photo right from the airport surface. This is an aircraft on the runway. This is the runway at Hartford-Brainard, and we're looking towards the south. We're looking towards Wethersfield.

The purpose of the project is pretty simple, and every environmental assessment study has a stated purpose; and it's pretty simple. We're just removing obstructions that penetrate the airspace. This enables the airport to comply with the federal design criteria, and we also -- we pointed out several places in the

1 report that is required. The -- as an obligated
2 airport, the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut
3 Airport Authority is required to make efforts to satisfy
4 those federal standards.
5 Looking at the photo, again, in the distance,
6 you can see the levee, or the dike, that surrounds the
7 runway; and then this is a current photo where you can
8 see the trees extend up above the dike that's located
9 there. The levee itself is about 30 feet in elevation
10 in some locations, so the trees come up quite a bit
11 higher than that. So this aircraft on the departure
12 needs to clear the levee and then clear also the trees
13 beyond the levee.
14 There are alternatives in the document. Every
15 EA needs to have a series of alternatives for comparison
16 purposes. We did keep it simple. There's three options
17 in there.
18 The first option is not recommended, and that's
19 do nothing. We got comments on doing nothing. CAA
20 doesn't have the option to pick that alternative. They
21 have to seek efforts and reasonable practices to clear
22 those obstructions to maintain safety.
23 On the other end of the spectrum is clear all
24 the obstructions. We call that a "full obstruction
25 removal alternative." We don't recommend that either.

After the first meeting here, we reiterated that with the FAA that, What's the goal here? What do we have to do? And they confirmed that you must meet the Design Standards penetrations. You must remove those to satisfy the safety. So that was the recommended alternative. It's sort of a hybrid between the two.

So this is going back to our discussion again with the slope, and I put in red, not recommended for the Part 77; but the blue is recommended for the Design Standards surfaces. And what does that do? You can see this tree here is penetrating both surfaces, so that comes on our recommendation to remove. This other sample tree here is shorter. It's penetrating the Part 77 but not the Design Standards surface, so that tree could be retained. So that's the approach that we're taking to the planned action.

The City of Hartford has a tree ordinance that was pointed out at the last meeting. CAA recognizes that ordinance that it is in effect. It wasn't put in place because of the airport or because of obstructions. It was the overall goal of the City to protect urban trees and forested areas throughout the city. So we mentioned this with the FAA as well; and we accept the ordinance, and it will be part of the effort to get the approvals to remove the trees. That ordinance does

1 include mitigation. It could include replanting. It
2 could include paying for trees to be replanted somewhere
3 else. Here is Wethersfield where -- about a third of
4 the tree removal is actually in Wethersfield, so this is
5 really applicable to the city of Hartford.
6 We also were able to do some scaling back of the
7 plan since the last meeting. Working with the FAA, this
8 is the area of removal that's in the document that's
9 online right now; and it includes the approaches. It
10 also includes a little bit more than just the
11 approaches. And we had said it was in the neighborhood
12 of 40 acres total area. We've since scaled that back.
13 It's the same alternative with a little trimming on the
14 area involved. Just toggling back and forth, what we
15 were able to do is trim some of the removals on the
16 edges of the surfaces and between the surfaces to reduce
17 the clearing area by about 25 percent, 40 acres down to
18 about 30 acres.
19 One question that we did get is: Why is the
20 southern surface wider? And the reason is, why it has
21 that strange angle is from the straight-in approach,
22 which is required to be cleared, is shown there coming
23 right in parallel to the runway. But this end of the
24 runway also has an offset approach that comes over the
25 river for both visual use and for instrument use; so

that widens the approach to clear some additional trees along the side so those -- so pilots can't come in over that river-bound approach.

Clearing Methods, we did mention this a couple of times before. I kind of brought it up a little bit more in this presentation because of the comments we've received. To make it simple, I wrote in the types of clearing down into the three overall categories, (a) being full clearing, stump removal and grading. This is the type of clearing you do when you have a project to build something, a development project. Where you remove the trees, you're also going to grind out or grub out the stumps, grade the area, and then potentially you're going to build something or plant grass or something to that effect. None of this stump removal type of grading is being proposed. Nowhere in the project are we looking at this.

There may be some areas where all the trees are cut, but there are no grubbing, pulling the stumps, paving, or development of any type. This is a comparison of an FAA-funded tree clearing project that did full clearing. The before was fully forested. After the trees were all cleared, but there was no grading or stump grubbing. And the trees grow right back. And this is 2009 before. The clearing happened

in 2010, so this is 2011. In 2016, you can see the trees coming right back.

Some of this type of approach is recommended in the study; but we even expect more area to be subject to this third type that we've been calling "selective thinning." And the reason we expect this primarily for Hartford-Brainard is because the area of trees is also floodplains and wetlands.

This is another FAA-funded airport clearing project, and this was the area beforehand in 2013. All of this area here is a flood -- is actually a wetland. Some of it's floodplain, but almost all of it's wetland. So this project was done with -- both state and federal wetland permits were required; and inspections had to have a wetland scientist on site, and they did a selective thinning per the permit. And this is the after approach. There were trees here that some of them were completely removed. Others you don't even notice so much of a difference.

So when this project moves to the next stage, this is the type of work we'll be doing, working with the regulatory agencies and working with the permit authorities to determine the means and methods of the clearing.

The majority of the document that's drafted goes

through the list of federal environmental criteria; and it covers the full gauntlet. What I've highlighted here were some of the categories that we triggered as a consideration.

Wetlands and floodplains, that was a big one from the start. This full image is, again, the southern end of the runway to -- the city line is here. This is Wethersfield. This is potential clearing area. It's almost all wetlands and floodplains. And because of that, before any clearing happens, state wetland permits will be required. Federal permits may even be required on top of the state, and significant efforts for erosion control and water quality protection. All that has to be documented during the design process, permitted, and approved, in this case, by DEEP.

Endangered and Threatened Species, we have several in the area. One of the ones that's talked about the most is the bald eagle; and there is a bald eagle nest right now near the clearing area. It's not in the clearing area, but it's close enough to be still protected and regulated.

In the next phase of the project, CAA will have to work with the regulatory agencies addressing any of the endangered species; and what would happen at that point is potential biological surveys, and seasonal

1 restrictions will be almost -- are sure to require that
2 the removal will probably be located -- scheduled for
3 winter months, January and February, either sides of the
4 breeding season, and mitigation and other seasons for
5 the species of concern. All this is coordinated with
6 both DEEP as well as the Fish and Wildlife Service.
7 Parks and Recreation, this came up a lot during
8 our study and during the comments that we've received.
9 The removal areas are not on the airport property, and
10 some of the areas are in conservation locations. We did
11 get comments on access to the river and recreational use
12 of this property. We have to defer those to the owners
13 of the property because CAA doesn't have any say over
14 that; but we do want to point out a few things
15 that -- the end of the runway is here. It got cut off
16 because I wanted to blow up this math map. This
17 illustration is here in Wethersfield, and here's
18 Wethersfield Cove. Here's the inlet under 91 and out to
19 the river. You can see all that.
20 Even though this is the border between the city
21 of Hartford and the town of Wethersfield, the property
22 is actually owned by the City itself. The City of
23 Hartford was the original owner of the airport and owned
24 much of the property of the airport and surrounding
25 areas. So this area is Wethersfield. Property owner is

1 the City of Hartford.
2 And back in 1990, the conservation of -- the
3 conservancy was given an easement by the City of
4 Hartford to control and operate this area; and this is
5 the area that's called the "Folly Brook Natural Area."
6 So the removals that are proposed are in this location
7 here within the conservation area.
8 Now, back in 1990, when that -- when the
9 conservancy took over the operation of this property, at
10 the same time the City -- the City has an agreement with
11 the conservancy to remove and maintain trees in this
12 area, A through D; and it's called the "tree removal
13 plan areas." And the intention there back in 1990 was
14 that, yes, we do want to conserve this area for
15 biological, ecological, and recreational use; but the
16 City recognized the need to protect the airspace that's
17 regulated at the federal level for the airport.
18 What we're proposing for the tree clearing here
19 in Wethersfield and at the airport is consistent and
20 only includes the areas that are identified back in 1990
21 to protect the airspace of the airport. So here in
22 Wethersfield, this -- you know, this is over a 10-acre
23 area. It's not necessarily a small area. But the tree
24 removal plan talks about only removing the trees that
25 are designated penetrations to the surface and regulates

other things such as time of the year and ecological benefits. So what CAA wants to do is follow the direction and the requirements back in that easement. Even though this easement wasn't there, they'd still be interested in following those guidelines.

For the rest of the property, which is in the city of Hartford, outside the conservancy area, you can even go back further to 1959 when the property of the airport was still a city, municipal airport. The State of Connecticut took over the airport back in that time frame, 1959; and the City and the State established a zoning plan very similar to this to regulate the airspace and enable the owner and operator of the airport to maintain the trees and the surfaces for the safety of the runway and the use of the airport. We did put that 1959 documentation on the study website as well in response to one of the comments.

Compatible Land Use was talked about in the previous study. The airport and the draft report does indicate that the airport is zoned industrial here; but the property where the tree removal is occurring in the city of Hartford is zoned as open space. We still don't see that as a land-use issue because this project doesn't recommend any development of any type. The property is open space now. It's trees; and, with the

1 thinning or some of the clearing, will remain as open
2 space.
3 Socio-Economic Considerations also came up. We
4 talked to the FAA considerably about this after the
5 first meeting here. There was a lot of concerns,
6 particularly in the city, about high asthma rates and
7 minority populations; and we talked with the FAA about
8 that and how the federal regulations apply in this case
9 because we're not building anything. We're just
10 maintaining some of the obstructions on the runway.
11 And, you know, the conclusion that we were reaching was
12 that project factors -- such as the area remaining
13 opened, remaining vegetated, remaining wooded in many
14 cases, reducing the area where we're trying to minimize
15 the total area of clearing down from the 40 acres and
16 also even with the consideration of mitigation through
17 the City's tree ordinance -- that the study is still
18 concluding that this removal is not having a major
19 impact on socio-economic conditions. So that was an
20 issue that has been brought up and we've gotten many
21 comments on; but that conclusion is really saying for
22 the report that there are impacts. Anything has an
23 impact, but they're not major based on the approach that
24 we're taking to the study.
25 Okay. That's the breath -- that's the entire

1 part of the formal presentation. We really scheduled
2 these hearings so we had time and opportunity to collect
3 public comments. It looks like a lot of people have
4 found our methods of getting to us because we've been
5 collecting dozens and dozens of comments on this study.
6 We have a website set up just for that. You can e-mail
7 the comments. They'll be permanently recorded if you
8 send them through the website. We did a lot of
9 advertisements, you know, more than last time. We
10 advertised in four separate newspapers, including one
11 Spanish language newspaper. We did three advertisements
12 in each. We also published the meeting on the
13 Connecticut Environmental Monitor as well as on the
14 website for the study.
15 This is the last of three formal public hearings
16 that have now occurred since the informal public meeting
17 we had here; and, again, you can send all your comments
18 by e-mail as well to Colin -- you don't have to write
19 any of this down. It's all in the handout.
20 Okay. With that, I'm going to stop talking.
21 Stephanie is going to read the instructions. This is a
22 formal hearing. We do have a stenographer who's going
23 to be recording everyone's testimony and will be in the
24 final report.
25 So, Stephanie, I think you're going to say the

same thing, and then we'll get started.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Thank you, Paul.

We will now commence with the public testimonies. If you have not signed up to speak and would like to do so, please, sign up now and put a check in front of your name. And you could sign up over to the front -- to your right at the table in the front.

The public comment process is as follows:

Please come forward and use the provided microphone when your name is called and restate your name for the record. Any elected officials and representatives will be asked to speak first followed by anyone with small children. If you are representing a specific organization, please, state so after your name.

Comments will be limited to three minutes. Once all participants have had a chance to speak, anyone who wishes to speak again will have the opportunity. Please limit comments to the proposed tree obstruction removal study that was presented tonight. Once everyone has had the opportunity to speak, again, those who wish to speak will have the opportunity to do so.

All comments will be part of the formal hearing record and will be published in the final document. Comments will be reviewed by the Connecticut Airport Authority, the Federal Aviation Administration, and

1 considered during -- and considered during the
2 preparation for the final study document.
3 Please note that no responses will be provided
4 tonight at the hearing; rather, all comments will be
5 recorded, reviewed by the appropriate professionals,
6 included in the hearing record, and addressed, and
7 considered in the final documents.
8 Written comments may be provided via the
9 website, at this meeting in the comment box, or directly
10 to the CAA until May 22nd of 2017. The website e-mail
11 and physical address is provided in the hearing
12 handouts.
13 If there are any elected officials that would
14 like to provide a statement at this time, please, raise
15 your hand.
16 JOHN FONFARA: I first have a question: Is -- I
17 came in just a few minutes ago and maybe you spoke to
18 this. Is this at all an effort to expand the runway of
19 the airport and to increase flights at that airport?
20 PAUL McDONNELL: For the general public, we're
21 not corresponding back and forth; but for the elected
22 officials, we are answering questions.
23 And, no, this is a one-subject project. It's
24 limited to tree clearing obstruction removal by
25 federal-designated airspace.

JOHN FONFARA: So there is no intent to expand the use of the airport?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What's your name? State your name for the record.

PAUL McDONNELL: This project is to remove obstructions regardless if activity goes up or activity goes down.

JOHN FONFARA: Can you say that again, please?

PAUL McDONNELL: It's a single-source project. There is one item under consideration in the environmental document; and that is the potential impacts of clearing existing tree obstructions that are penetrating the federal airspace. It's not related to supporting increases of the activity or vice-versa. Whether those happen, it's not the subject of this study.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: State your name.

JOHN FONFARA: You're not denying that that's a possibility?

PAUL McDONNELL: Activity at the airport changes every year.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you announce who you are?

JOHN FONFARA: State Senator John Fonfara. I represent the area where the airport is. I represent

85 percent of Wethersfield and the entire area in Hartford in which this area is located.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

JOHN FONFARA: I'll come back the with other questions, if needed.

ANTHONY GUERRERA: Good evening, everyone. I'm State Representative Tony Guerrera. I'm glad that the Connecticut Airport Authority is here addressing some of the issues.

I was here last time in regards to the hearing -- the public hearing -- well, not necessary public hearing but informational hearing. There were a lot of questions that, obviously, a lot of people out there were concerned with that weren't answered; and specifically some of them that Senator Fonfara just mentioned in regards to expansion of the airport; and also that we've seen that the reduction of trees and some of the concerns that maybe were not raised here at this informational hearing was that the pathway that some of these planes take in regards that we addressed last time -- that they're supposed to be flying over the river into the runway, and they don't do that. So this would allow me to think that now cutting the trees down will allow even more activity, more airspace to go right over homes and so forth in Old Wethersfield and Hartford

1 and so forth.
2 And also -- also some of the issues that I have
3 here is that the easement, the ecosystem, all
4 that -- I'm hoping that those will be addressed. I did
5 not necessarily hear that in this informational hearing.
6 We have a letter from the delegation here that raises
7 those concerns. I know that you met already with the
8 City of Hartford. I'm wondering how they felt in
9 regards to what you presented to them.
10 Do you have any information you could give to us
11 in regards to that meeting?
12 PAUL McDONNELL: We did meet with mayor of the
13 City of Hartford. He asked us questions about the
14 project. The answers we gave were very similar to this
15 discussion, and the mayor did not present a statement or
16 a formal finding or any decision pro or against the
17 airport at that meeting.
18 ANTHONY GUERRERA: I'm going to hand it -- I'm
19 going to be perfectly honest. I just want to make sure
20 that I'm very clear here. Every time I hear something
21 happening with the airport, it does raise eyebrows in
22 regards that there could be an expansion of some sort or
23 something going on there. You know, for us to do this,
24 raises concerns not only with us but also the residents
25 and the community in regards to will there be more

activity. And that is something that we still haven't heard a definite answer yes or no on.

RUSSELL MORIN: Good evening, everyone. I'm Russ Morin, state representative of the 28th District. I do represent the Wethersfield Cove area.

We have as a delegation provided -- in my hand I have a letter to the airport authority that we will submit for the record.

You know, this is a topic that I've received a great amount of correspondence on, the concern of the citizens about what could be happening at the airport. Let's -- I know that you're not necessarily here to hear certain things; but the folks that live in that neighborhood -- and I basically think going all along even into the Broad Street Green -- have contacted me since I was mayor in 2003 complaining that it's a living hell getting buzzed by frequent flights. I've received more correspondence on that than I think on almost anything.

This -- Representative Guerrera, let's not kid ourselves. You don't often find a construction guy that's concerned with the environment, so that's pretty impressive.

ANTHONY GUERRERA: I do save a lot of trees, though, Representative.

1 RUSSELL MORIN: So, you know, there's a whole
2 host of issues; and to be fair to the airport authority,
3 they were not involved in the two things that I'm going
4 to mention. They weren't in charge at that time.
5 But if anybody remembers the previous cutting at
6 Brainard Airport, that didn't turn out so well; and then
7 we had a problem up at Bradley that really didn't turn
8 out well. And I was working at the Department of
9 Transportation at the time, and massive fines and really
10 poor execution. And I think that's what brings a lot of
11 people here today, those concerns.
12 When you talk about the bald eagle nest in close
13 proximity, when you talk about the floodplains, folks
14 are concerned about what's going to happen to the
15 quality of life because Wethersfield people consider our
16 natural resources a strong quality of life issue
17 and -- so there is a lot of distrust; and whether it's
18 fair or not, it's there. And I think people are going
19 to have to -- and I'm going to want to feel very
20 confident that if things are going to have to be
21 done -- and it seems like going through the process,
22 this is, I think, a long process. We're at Stage 1 of a
23 very long process -- that there's going to be
24 sensitivity. It's going to be done right and I
25 had -- get a lot of skepticism.

1 So we will submit this letter for the record.
2 We are going to stay on top of this. We are going to
3 continue to listen to our constituents, and we're going
4 to continue to advocate to make sure that their concerns
5 are addressed.
6 A couple of things that were brought to
7 me -- and I don't know because I was not at that first
8 meeting -- but there were a whole slew of questions that
9 were asked at that first meeting that I've been told
10 folks haven't been answered on; and if that's the case,
11 I think answers should be forthcoming. I understand the
12 way this process works is not a question-and-answer for
13 all of you folks, and I'm sorry for that; but we'll, you
14 know, do our best to get your answers if you bring them
15 to us.
16 So, again, I do thank you for being here, all of
17 you. Kevin Dillon, the chief administrator -- I'm
18 probably blowing his title but -- you know, from the
19 airport authority is here to hear what you have to say;
20 so that is good to hear, and it's also good that so many
21 of you that have taken the time to reach out to us have
22 showed up here as well.
23 PAUL DOYLE: Good evening, everyone. My name's
24 Paul Doyle, State Senator. I represent the 15 percent
25 of Wethersfield that Senator Fonfara does not. I live

on the other side of town, so this is not part of my district at all; but I'm here. I'm a native of Wethersfield -- I was for my whole life -- so I appreciate what's going on. I too am here just basically to provide a united front of our delegation.

We're concerned with what's going on; and assuming the planes were to do the proper landing using the Connecticut River, I really don't know why we would have to take down these trees in this open space.

Now, the problem is, we want to preserve as much open space as we can. In the state of Connecticut, we have such little open space; so really it does not make sense to me. And I'm hopeful today with the public position today -- I'm sure many of you will express your opinion -- we can move forward to prevent this. Currently, I don't really see the justification. If they're not supposed to go over the line, well, why are they?

And I'm fortunate to say, you know, Representative Guerrera is the chairman of the Transportation Committee. Russ is a member of it, and Senator Fonfara's the chairman of the finance committee; so we'll certainly keep an eye on this and I -- I'm just looking for a solid justification that I haven't seen for this cutting.

1 And Senator Fonfara wants to follow up.
2 JOHN FONFARA: Thank you, Paul.
3 I just want to say that I came -- we came from a
4 very, very long meeting today; and I'm getting my head
5 in where I am now. But let me say that I intend to
6 speak to Mayor Luke Bronin on whatever rights the City
7 of Hartford has to retain, to ensure, the best we can
8 that -- that not only Hartford residents but its
9 neighboring residents of Wethersfield are first and
10 foremost in consideration with respect to whatever
11 abilities Hartford has to effect this. I will do
12 everything I can.
13 I think many of you know my position regarding
14 the airport. I don't need to say it again; but with
15 respect, as long as the airport is there, there should
16 be safety for the pilots but in a way, as Paul said, to
17 follow the river. That's long been the path that the
18 airport -- that the planes are supposed to take. They
19 often do not and that's wrong. And to the extent that
20 we can effect this going forward one way or another -- I
21 see Mr. Dillon sitting in the back. He's the chairman
22 of the CAA that I know that he knows that we'll be
23 talking to him about this process going forward.
24 Thank you.
25 PAUL McDONNELL: All set?

1 Thank you.
2 STEPHANIE PARSON: Thank you so much.
3 Is there any other elected official in the
4 audience that would like to give testimony?
5 AMY BELLO: I would.
6 Good evening. My name is Amy Bello, and I'm a
7 town council member; and I would like to oppose this
8 tree cutting as well.
9 I live in Old Wethersfield. My husband and I
10 walk in Old Wethersfield every day, and we're constantly
11 seeing the airplanes coming in over Old Wethersfield
12 instead of over the river; and I feel that cutting these
13 trees will just increase the use of that flight path
14 instead of the one that they are supposed to take.
15 I'm also concerned with the environmental impact
16 on Old Wethersfield, especially the Folly Brook nature
17 area. It is home to endangered animals, and the trees
18 do provide a sound barrier and they -- they give us
19 oxygen and -- so for those reasons I do oppose this tree
20 cutting.
21 PAUL MONTINIERI: I know most of you know I'm
22 Mayor Montinieri.
23 Following the first meeting, I wanted to share
24 for those that didn't know Councilor Rell and I authored
25 together a resolution with respect to the clearing

1 proposal by the CAA, which reflected the commentary from
2 the community -- not just Wethersfield, Hartford -- in a
3 similar-filled room several months ago.
4 We continue -- and I'm sure Mike would agree
5 with me. We continue to express concern about the
6 proposal, which, I think, is still very early in its
7 stages. But I think the primary thing that I continue
8 to express some -- some hesitancy, if not full-fledged
9 concern about is -- and it doesn't seem to get
10 addressed -- I hear, of course, what's being said from
11 CAA in terms of this study. But anybody that lives in
12 the Wethersfield district knows that the flight patterns
13 of the aircraft that come over the district,
14 particularly the Broad Street Green and the Old
15 Wethersfield district, have been plagued by this concern
16 that Russ shared. And my concern about the layout of
17 the tree clearing, particularly on the southern portion,
18 that still remains very unsettled for me. And I think
19 our delegation, obviously, is very in tune with this and
20 will continue to communicate your concerns, which I'll
21 hear, I'm sure, again tonight is we're making it easier
22 for the flight patterns to come over Wethersfield as
23 opposed to deterring that and -- so I understand when
24 you look at the flight patterns -- and the analytical
25 analysis by CAA is saying if the flight patterns are

such that they're available completely on a voluntary basis -- which is part of the problem, because this isn't an airport that has regular air traffic control directing flights. It's all voluntary -- they're looking at a clearing method that takes into account what's happening in reality, so it's sort of a Catch 22. We're going to recognize that flights are coming over the district, which is not our preferred method even though it's a voluntary approach, and we're going to clear trees that -- the proposal calls for clearing trees that makes that safer. Well, that's just going to worsen the concern that the residents in Wethersfield have.

So that's my primary objection to it, and I think it's safe to assume it will be yours as well. We certainly understand the safety concerns that the FAA is going to express. I like that there is some suggestion this evening from all about the fact that modifies our position.

I also want to be clear to say that that should not be a sense of undo comfort to believe that that means that we're going to drift into a direction that while better is still not accomplishing the goals of what your concerns are.

So having said that, I'm sure the council as a

full group will continue to monitor this. We have some time, obviously. This is not something happening in the next year or two; but our delegation will stay involved. The City of Hartford will stay involved. The easement, environmental issues, air quality, and wildlife will all be part of our discussions, rest assured.

So, hopefully, that's helpful. Thank you.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Thank you.

Any other elected officials that would like to speak? Perfect.

I would like to invite anyone with small children that wish to provide testimony to, please, raise their hand.

MARY KAY JENSEN: Hi. I'm Mary Kay Jensen.

Do I tell you my street?

PAUL McDONNELL: Who do you represent?

MARY KAY JENSEN: I'm a resident. I'm with the community Wethersfield Unity Group. This is Annika. And we are here today as concerned citizens, and we've dressed up nicely. Sorry.

I have a vested interest in 20 acres of land in my town. Trees clean the air. I like to breathe air. My children like to do it. All of you here need it.

A quick story: I went all the way to Alaska to find eagles and found none. I came to Wethersfield and

found four. Those eagles need a place to live.

Trees are a natural sound barrier. I love my place. It is loud. When it's nice out, there's tons of airplanes flying overhead. It's beautiful. It's fun. Kids like to see it. I don't know if I want to increase the number of that flying over my head every day.

So those are my main points. I'd like to get her the bed, but I oppose it. I like to breathe air. I love my wildlife. And I moved from Boston to greener pastures. I don't want to cut down my greener pastures.

Thank you.

MATTHEW FORREST: Hi. I'm Matthew Forrest, 72 Somerset Street. Counting humans here, I've got my daughter Grace and my son Julian. I'm on the Wethersfield Board of Education, probably not just sort of representing them but more myself.

As far as an educational standpoint, we run lots of programs down there in the area. Some of them we even saw the videotape. We run a lot of environmental along with Goodwin College. So the destruction of this type of wildlife could certainly be a hindrance of that type of educational opportunity that we provide our citizens.

But if we are going to get directly to the tree cutting portion of what we're talking about, certainly,

the least invasive maneuver should be taken; and that would be not in regard to cost. I'll provide you a couple ideas.

First of all, certainly, if we have a 60-foot tree that is violating the airspace by 1 foot, you don't take the whole 60-foot tree down. That may sound obvious, but that's not necessarily what was represented on the screen. If you want to take the top foot off, that might be one thing; but only take the violating aspect of the tree, not the entire tree itself. Certainly, you would provide -- you would provide a portion of the resources that went into providing that 60-year old tree, and you wouldn't get rid of the whole thing; so I think we should talk about the most minimum invasive tree cutting, if something has to happen.

Next on the slide I saw that there was a required portion, and I would note that I'm not necessarily certain that that is true. We have many standards. I saw the 20 to 1 slope. I saw the 34 to 1 slope, and I also saw the berm going right through one of them. So that would indicate to me -- and not only just in the general knowledge of how we do planning and zoning in all the towns in Connecticut -- that variances can be applied for. So we would be certain that a variance is applied for, supported by our delegation,

and then rejected in order to have to move forward with this particular project. We've got lots of airplane runways which do not necessarily have these glide slopes in the United States; so I believe that that should be the next step taken before we can confirm that this is absolutely necessary.

The next is there is some discussion -- I'm not talking about the amount of flights that come in or out; but if there is a discussion about either extending or changing the runway in any way, that we would also have to note where is that glide slope being drawn from. And if it's being drawn from a runway which is moved north by 100 feet -- if there is talk about doing that in the next 24 months and this project is not being planned to be put in place in the next 24 months, then that glide slope can be moved north and, therefore, effect less of the trees in the area describe.

The next is, for any tree that is removed or touched in the town of Wethersfield, mitigation should be given to the Town of Wethersfield for a replacement tree that the Town of Wethersfield could plant in its stead either on the location or not on the location thereby providing our citizens and this town with some type of restitution for any of the damage done to the air.

1 And, lastly, I want to point out that the
2 type -- the area that you're talking about is -- has
3 aesthetic value as well as the regular environmental
4 value, and that portion that you're planning to remove
5 is on our seal. It is a part that we've protected time
6 and time again over the decades. I served with Russ
7 Morin when we went to fight a lawsuit to protect the
8 area.
9 PAUL McDONNELL: Three minutes, sir.
10 MATTHEW FORREST: And I'll finish in just 10
11 seconds, sir, please. Is that all right? Thank you. I
12 appreciate that. I understand the time.
13 So -- and that we graduate every year for
14 decades on a -- on an area that overlooks the part
15 that -- our graduating senior class overlooks the part
16 that you're -- not you, but, you know, the FAA or the
17 requirements are -- suggesting that we take down. So I
18 certainly oppose this particular method, but that we use
19 all resources in order to mitigate any potential
20 negative impact.
21 Thank you for your time, and I appreciate the
22 extra seconds.
23 PAUL McDONNELL: We're sticking with parents
24 with small children.
25 And I will say that once everyone has had one

chance to speak, I think we will have time to give other people a second opportunity to continue testimony.

JENNIFER REGAN-LEFEBVRE: Good evening. My name is Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre. I'm on Willard Street in Old Wethersfield.

I have a very large tree and a lot of planes that fly directly over my backyard every day. To be honest, I'm not terribly bothered by the noise of the planes; but if you actually live in Old Wethersfield, you know that noise operates in a lot of different ways. So one of our biggest problems is the noise from 91, and the more trees that we remove the less buffer we have. Now, you might look at the map and say, Oh, yeah, but 91 isn't really there. You know if you live in Old Wethersfield depending on the time of year, how many leaves are on the trees, and which direction the wind is blowing determines how much you hear from 91; and this has a really bad impact on our property values. There are beautiful homes in Old Wethersfield that are really ruined by the impact of 91. The more trees that we remove from this area, the worse off we are.

I've also said that the trees give our community its distinctive character. You could say, to be a little bit crass, it's part of our brand; and that just means densely wooded areas as well as individual trees.

I think it's interesting that we're having this discussion at this time of year when Wethersfield is so beautiful because of the trees coming into full foliage.

I'm not just in envy, though, even though this is happening in my backyard. There is so much research to demonstrate that there's a strong relationship between natural environment and quality of life. In fact, I would also point out a study in Social Indicators Research which shows that actually the environmental quality that you get from having trees around you is related to your educational level and that more vulnerable communities actually benefit more from having more trees, from having more of a natural environment. We need to think about our neighbors in parts of southern Hartford who are less well off than us and how they will suffer from the removal of trees.

I think that's all I want to say.

I think there's a lot of frustration in the room this evening. It feels a little bit like the CAA is passing the buck to their consultant. It's not clear to me if the consultants are acting in a neutral capacity or not as environmentalists or whether they are actually working on behalf of CAA to get this point across to us. That's rather frustrating. They would ask us to only comment on the study, which I have read carefully; but

1 we can't divorce the study from the real question about
2 the future of the airport. I think that's on all of our
3 minds and we need to have a much broader discussion
4 about that.
5 At the moment it's really hard for me to see as
6 a resident of Wethersfield, as a resident of central
7 Connecticut, why we should be depriving ourselves of
8 oxygen, why we should be depriving ourselves of trees
9 for a publicly-funded airport that funds a small number
10 of hobbyists to pollute. That's what the airport is
11 doing; and if you want to destroy the character of
12 Wethersfield by cutting down trees because you think
13 that the airport is our economic future, you are robbing
14 from Peter to pay Paul.
15 Thank you.
16 PAUL McDONNELL: Other parents with children
17 that would like to speak first.
18 Okay. Then we are going to read the names in
19 the order of the sign-in.
20 STEPHANIE PARSONS: I apologize if I butcher
21 anyone's name.
22 Shep.
23 SHEP DURO: Good evening, everyone. My name is
24 Shep Duro, and I'm a Rocky Hill resident and I am
25 representing myself.

First, I want to thank CAA and the CHA for the presentation. I love Wethersfield. It's a place where my American dream started 19 years ago. I came from Albania, legally by the way, to start working at the Village Pizza in Wethersfield. I remember in wintertime shoveling, cleaning, and putting salt in front door making safer for customers walking in and out of restaurant. A wise man said, "Don't argue with person speaking better English than yours." But I will take a chance.

Hartford-Brainard serve the corporation, public safety, training law enforcement, medical, recreation and personal purposes. Hartford-Brainard Lifestar lands every day. They save lives around the town of Rocky Hill, town of -- around the state of Connecticut. State trooper in the same way serving with the helicopter in their mission every day. In the other way, the planes that landing in the Brainard Airport sometimes transporting organs for transplanting in the Hartford Hospital because of the -- it's closer to Hartford Hospital than going to Bradley.

In the other hand, Brainard Airport serves as a relief pressure for Bradley Airport because of the long -- a lot of planes landing there for the small planes and the corporation planes. They come and land

in Bradley Airport. I understand deserve better environment for all. Believe me, I love trees. Trees can't talk. That's why we are here talking for them. We will take care of them in our house, but sometimes we have to make decision to trim some of branches when they are becoming danger in our driveways or our house roofs. We have to think the same way for the safety of our friends, fathers, brothers, and sisters that are taking off and landing at Brainard every day.

I drive every day I91 and I see the spring and fall workers trimming trees in the cove part, and we don't raise our voices because we don't want our lives to be in danger. We have to feel the same way for pilots that fly from Brainard.

I heard one of the persons before -- and I apologize for I don't remember his name -- but I agree 100 percent with proposal for replacing old trees with a new trees that don't grow taller so we can keep the environment and keeping the trees.

We live in a modern society, and sometimes we have to disagree with each other for different issues. Hartford is celebrating 96 anniversary this year, and I am pretty sure somebody will bring noise issues here; and some of the people that spoke before me said that they increase the number of the flights but I will --

1 I'm working Brainard Airport from 13 years. In 2010,
2 was 79,000 flights landing and taking off from the
3 Brainard Airport.
4 PAUL McDONNELL: Three minutes.
5 SHEP DURO: And the presentation that we have
6 here was 50,000; so it's not increasing the flights.
7 But what we trying to do here is making safe for our
8 friends' lives.
9 In 20 years the Hartford-Brainard noise for
10 aircraft operation has declined slightly because of
11 older aircraft are replaced with modern aircraft with
12 lower noise footprints.
13 PAUL McDONNELL: Sir, can you give someone else
14 a chance and then come back at the end of the session?
15 SHEP DURO: Sure.
16 PAUL McDONNELL: You're over three minutes.
17 SHEP DURO: All right. I'm just closing.
18 PAUL McDONNELL: Okay.
19 SHEP DURO: Pilots, FAA, CAA working every day
20 for making less noise as possible following noise
21 abatement procedures, flight policies and compliance.
22 Thank you, everyone.
23 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Cyril.
24 CYRIL PHAM: Good evening, everyone. I've been
25 flying out of -- basically, I fly. I'm a pilot. I've

1 been flying out of Brainard Airport for 14 years.
2 So I'm basically -- my concern here with the
3 trees is just a safety issue. I don't think anyone here
4 wants to cut any trees down. No one wants to cut trees
5 down, but I just want to go over a few safety issues.
6 I'm just going to go through my list right now.
7 Most departures from Brainard Airport take off
8 heading north on Runway 2. Runway 2 is the closest to
9 Wethersfield, and that -- you know, so when they take
10 off, they go towards Bradley. When the winds are
11 favoring departure for Runway 20, which is the other
12 side, aircraft will be departing heading south. This
13 voluntary departure procedure requires an immediate left
14 turn after liftoff as soon as the captain has acquired
15 an average of 400 feet above the ground. That's usually
16 average, most airplanes. Again, this is an average.
17 By visual reference, the pilot should fly east
18 of the Highway 91 -- you guys are all aware of
19 that -- and fly over the Connecticut River to avoid Old
20 Wethersfield residential and noise-sensitive areas.
21 If the pilot should encounter engine
22 failure -- this is the part that I'm concerned about.
23 If the pilot should encounter engine failure after
24 takeoff on Runway 20 heading towards
25 Wethersfield -- and, again, we saw a picture on the

slide with the dike and then with the trees and how high they are -- and attempt to continue to climb on a single engine, it would require not that -- it would require that the aircraft fly steep enough and to climb to safely clear all the trees without risk of stalling the airplane or hitting the trees.

If the trees were as tall as the dike, the level of safety would greatly be increased because the required single-engine climb angle would be less steep; therefore, the probability of clearing the trees in an emergency situation would be much greater. I don't know if that makes any sense; but, basically, airplanes would have a greater probability of clearing the trees on a single engine if they were lower.

Important fact to know about the Brainard Airport for arrivals: Hartford Jet Center, Brainard Control Towers are working together towards establishing a visual reporting points to aid in staying east of Highway 91 to support flying over the Connecticut River to land. These procedures are used today in many business airports and will soon be used more frequently in Hartford.

The regular procedures are designed to keep aircraft at least 15 miles away southwestern center of Brainard Airport until over the Connecticut River; so if

1 we can get recording points that are over the river,
2 it'll keep pilots away from Old Wethersfield. That's
3 what we're working towards right now.
4 As an aircraft approaches Runway 2 for landing,
5 the descent angle is much steeper than it should be
6 because of the tall trees causing a much greater risk
7 toward the aircraft landing. With a steeper flying
8 angle comes increased speed. With increased speed
9 comes -- with increased speed will cause a longer
10 landing distance. With longer landing distances, it
11 increases the risk of running short with available
12 landing distance. So because the trees are so tall by
13 the time you land, you might land long, which gives you
14 a shorter distance to stop the airplane which because of
15 trees could run a risk.
16 PAUL McDONNELL: Three minutes now.
17 CYRIL PHAM: Oh, it's three minutes. Okay.
18 And again the trees -- one last thing: And,
19 again, with the trees with at night low visibility, you
20 don't see them as well; so if we could trim a little bit
21 of them, I think it would make things safer. That's it.
22 Thank you.
23 MICHAEL DE GRUCHY: Michel De Gruchy, citizen
24 living on Morrison Avenue. And by way of background, I
25 actually have sat on the planning commission for the

1 Toronto Island Airport. I have a graduate study in
2 environmental management; but, more importantly, I have
3 spent on that one mile of river about 600 hours in the
4 last nine years paddling through there. I paddle
5 through there 12 months of the year. And on the rain
6 gauge from -- the river gauge from Hartford, anywhere
7 from less than a foot to 18 feet, which you guys
8 probably know, is a significant flood level. And a
9 couple of notes on the study itself that I had a concern
10 with.
11 One is it mentions there's one eagle's nest
12 100-something feet south of the bottom end. There were
13 three active -- there were three eagle's nests at the
14 north end of the study area; at least two of those are
15 active. So you might want to update your study as far
16 as that goes.
17 On the trees, the trees seem to be addressed as
18 trees; and you mentioned different heights of trees in
19 identifying them. 600 hours of watching planes -- I
20 should also point out, my son's an Air Force pilot, so I
21 do actually watch airplanes a lot. The -- to the actual
22 trees that protrude into the flight path, there are
23 seven trees at the south end; and that's really just if
24 you're coming in over the not-preferred path through Old
25 Wethersfield. If you come up the river, the cottonwoods

are not there. The silver maples are mostly -- they're not going to get much taller than they are now ever, and they're pretty consistent height. The things that are bopping up are the cottonwoods. There are also five cottonwoods at the north end, one of which has an eagle's nest in it. So those are the specific concerns on there.

The really big and important thing, though, is the repairing erosion. Based on all that paddling throughout the year, I know that the silver maples in that first 80 to 100 feet back from the river have a huge impact on the flow of the river and the speed of the flow of the river. Leaving just stumps is not going to do it because the impact those trees have is that -- is they tip forward into the river. They're in the river, and they're a significant reduction in the flow. And I don't have time tonight in three minutes, but I can tell you literally almost foot by foot what the flow is because if you're in a kayak you're really sensitive to that. The concern about the recurring erosion is, one, that it's occurring right where the sewer outfall is so it's a fairly torpid area that's there. Even if it erodes back, that may or may not be a concern; but the big concern for us is we just spent how many millions of dollars clearing out the cove channel

that had to be dredged. And the erosion that's going to come off if you clear anything back in the first 80 to 100 feet -- remember, this is a tidal area, so the flow is not out of the cove. It's into the cove and out of the cove; so the erosion coming off of that immediate area there is going to flow back up into that channel and re-silts up that channel, which means we're going to get stuck with a bill for clearing that channel again.

So those are my sort of immediate concerns off of your plan, and I would like to see those addressed.

By the way, the erosion issue is not addressed in any way other than one very dismissive comment in your plan and completely inadequate.

Thank you.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Cindy.

CINDY GREENBLATT: Hi. My name is Cynthia Greenblatt. I'm here with my husband Howard. We're residents of Wethersfield. I have three quick points, hopefully three minutes. The first one piggybacks right off of the last speaker.

There were very, very few trees that seem to be actual obstructions. In your report you say several times "tall trees." Different slides reference tall trees. That's not what's covered under the easement, and I hope that everybody will give a little debit of

gratitude to Eleanor Buck Wolf for finding the devastation that took place in this area and making sure that there was an easement in place to protect the trees. Those that are obstructions, they are -- I in no way want to cause any pilot to feel unsafe in flying, but only those trees are covered under the easement.

The second thing is your environmental assessment. I read through it repeatedly, over and over. I cannot understand your conclusions. No significant impact to the floodplain forest. No significant impact to endangered species. No significant impact to, as the previous speaker said, erosion. No significant impact to raising the temperature of the water -- of the river, which the trees shade. There was no significant impact at all to cutting 30 acres of trees. It's not believable, and I think that's why a previous speaker mentioned there's such tension in this room because nobody really feels this is just about pilot safety. If it was, there's a -- you know, a complete plan in place that's been there since 1990 to address pilot safety.

The last thing is, is I won't even suggest that you go back and re-do the environmental assessment because the fate of Brainard Airport is not determined; and, as many know, there are other suggestions for the

1 use of this land. The mayor of Hartford himself said in
2 testimony in Hartford that he would prefer a different
3 use for this property. I think in testimony in Hartford
4 when we heard that the airport would like to see 100,000
5 takeoffs and landings it created a sense of true unease
6 and dismay amongst the citizens of Wethersfield that
7 this is much more than just pilot safety that's at stake
8 here and -- so I would say and I would suggest that
9 before anything is done that all of this is
10 premature -- one minute. Thank you -- all of this is
11 really premature. There's no immediate danger to
12 pilots, as you stated in your report. This is two years
13 down the road. So there's nobody right now that's in
14 any danger or jeopardy from these trees. Otherwise,
15 there would be a much more immediate concern. So why
16 don't we determine what the fate of this airport is
17 going to be? How many thousands of dollars have been
18 spent already on studies? How many thousands of dollars
19 will it take to cut these trees, to take up the permits,
20 to mitigate all the land?
21 I want to just read one fact for you: Despite
22 the claim that Brainard Airport generates somehow $40
23 million in income, this is the balance sheet that was
24 submitted by the CAA for the year ending June 30, 2016.
25 The operating loss for Brainard Airport was $941,275; so

1 I would like to see us revisit the future of Brainard
2 before we spend another dollar.
3 Thank you.
4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My name is Lulu, and I'm
5 here to speak for the trees.
6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right. So I just
7 want to give you a little background of my connection
8 with Wethersfield. I moved here in -- from San Diego,
9 California, on February 18, 2009. Now, you can imagine
10 the weather at that time. I'm not really familiar with
11 the snow, so I packed my kids in the car; and I said,
12 Let's go discover our town.
13 The car ride lead me to the cove, and we got out
14 of the car and just stared at the breathtaking beauty.
15 Now, I know this is -- sorry. I'm nervous.
16 I've never spoken in front of so many people.
17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're doing fine.
18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This is my first memory
19 of the place I proudly call my town; and to think that
20 we might lose part of the trees in the cove and along
21 the Connecticut River is sad. Now, this is just an
22 aesthetic reason, but there are so many other reasons
23 why. Killing -- possibly killing 30 acres of
24 trees is not acceptable.
25 The impact it will have on our wildlife and on

1 endangered and non-endangered species, every type of
2 habitat destruction results in loss of species. There's
3 no way around it. Fragmentation results from loss of
4 resources to these species; such as, foods, and meats,
5 etc.
6 Trees also play a critical role in absorbing the
7 greenhouse gases that fuel climate change. Fewer
8 forests means larger amount of greenhouse gases entering
9 the atmosphere; so trees basically purify the air.
10 Now, I'm not a scientist or biologist or
11 anything like that, but I have learned in the first
12 grade that trees provide oxygen or something like that.
13 I'm sure I'm not telling you something you don't already
14 know; but given these facts, I think deforestation is an
15 extremely bad idea. And it will impact us all
16 negatively.
17 I understand the argument of safety concerns,
18 but I am against massive and unnecessary removal of
19 trees. And I urge you to find an alternative way; such
20 as, maybe planting -- other people have said planting
21 different types of trees and for every tree you take out
22 maybe planting another tree.
23 Thank you.
24 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Mr. Stamos, would you like
25 to -- no. Okay.

Casey White.

CASEY WHITE: Hi. I'm Casey White. I live here in Wethersfield.

And I read through the draft statement today; and it was really kind of hilarious, honestly, to read all these findings, like Cindy said, of no impact. You know, maybe part of that is the guidelines on -- but, you know what, I don't care. Like, you can't replace old-growth trees. You can't replace wetlands. These things protect us.

The oxygen -- I'm an asthmatic. I don't even live in Hartford with bad air quality in my school or my home; and there's days you can't breathe. We need these trees for oxygen.

And, honestly, I don't think that this airport, as wonderful as it might be for the pilots who use it, I don't really want our state money using this. I want CAA to make it really transparent on their website who is paying for this. The report mentioned that maybe federal funding would pay for it. If they don't pay for it, who's going to pay for it? The state's in a budget crisis. We're already operating at a loss at the airport; and to spend money on this when we're cutting so many essential services throughout the state is not acceptable. And I just feel like there are so many

1 things that it's hard to think through.
2 But another thing is, we know the FAA requires
3 these trees to be removed to the extent feasible. What
4 if it's not feasible? What if permission isn't granted?
5 The airport is operating currently; and, you know what,
6 it is an old airport. We're in a new century. We need
7 to rethink maybe the way we operate. Maybe the CAA
8 should figure out how to make Brainard fit with the
9 existing environmental situation and not the other way
10 around, changing the trees to fit the airport, because
11 we really need to keep our priorities straight.
12 I'm the parent of a young child; and, you know
13 what, honestly, like, the people who run the airport are
14 not going to be around as long as she is; and I want the
15 trees to be here for her. And I want a lot more
16 transparency about funding and a lot more transparency
17 about the process on the website, like, updated weekly.
18 Throughout the whole process, once the permits are
19 required, you know, for whatever happens, I want to know
20 accountability, if they were followed, who was doing it,
21 easily available, not thrown away somewhere deep in a
22 report where people aren't going to find it, on the
23 website, easy to find.
24 Thank you.
25 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Maria Alfonso.

MARIA ALFONSO: Hi, there. I'll do my best not to talk too close to the thing. I'm Maria Alfonso. I live in Wethersfield. I do not live in Old Wethersfield, but I feel strongly about it. I don't have to live in Old Wethersfield.

First of all, I'm just going to make two points. One is a technical point.

There's a conservation easement agreement between the City and the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut, which is part of Nature Conservancy nationally. And my question is: Are they -- have they been contacted and consulted consistent with the language of the conservation easement that talks about what the method is, the methodology of selecting trees, etc.? So that's a technical argument, and I'm focusing on, actually, Page 2, which is paragraph 3 on Page 2 of that agreement, that goes into detail about what has to happen, the parties that have to be involved in that. I haven't heard anything about that, and that's a legal argument; but it is an equally important one because the legality is how to fight it.

My other point is just a general one that two previous speakers before me went into very excellent in-depth detail of the impact; but I'm just going to make it from a more generic point. I have stood in an

1 old-growth forest in Washington State, and I stood right
2 next to the part the government was tearing down; and
3 once you tear those babies down, they do not come back.
4 And mother nature gives you the gift; and once you
5 destroy it, you cannot replace those old-growth forests.
6 And I just spent several months in South
7 Carolina. They call them "marshes" or "the wetlands."
8 And someone I knew I asked, How did you manage to
9 preserve those wetlands?
10 And her answer was, Thank God, we were poor in
11 South Carolina, so we did not have the economic
12 development that justified just cutting them all down.
13 And you can go to Folly Beach in South Carolina,
14 and you can go to the -- what they call the "low
15 country." And you can see what nature provides.
16 And it's also a safety thing. Once you lose
17 those wetlands, the impact to the rivers and the
18 flooding -- South Carolina lives by that; so they have
19 much in common with us in Connecticut, and I keep
20 reminding them of that when I go down there.
21 And, coincidentally, I'm wearing the colors of
22 the College of Charleston, which happens to have a
23 palmetto tree.
24 STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute.
25 MARIA ALFONSO: And I want to say thank you to

1 everyone who spoke on both ways on this issue before me
2 and after me. I think it's important that we should
3 speak our minds because government is only going to
4 respond if we become actively involved; so thank you for
5 everyone's position on this. This is strongly felt by
6 all of us for a whole host of reasons.
7 I want to thank the delegation, as well as the
8 mayor and other elected officials, who are willing to
9 come forth and speak on our behalf as well.
10 Thank you.
11 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Lisa Galinski.
12 LISA GALINSKI: Good evening. My name is Lisa
13 Galinski, and I'm a resident of West Hartford, actually
14 not Wethersfield. But I'm here because I think this is
15 such an important issue; and I'm glad so many folks in
16 this town are well informed about the legal and
17 environmental implications. I just want to speak to the
18 larger context.
19 I noticed in the presentation this evening a lot
20 of the justifications for the project are, Oh, we'll be
21 compliant with regulations, you know, in a couple years
22 from now as we move forward. We all know here that a
23 lot of environmental protection at the federal level is
24 at risk at this time; and, frankly, we cannot rely on
25 that, let alone the dubious conclusions of this report

1 to date. So that's something we need to remember; and
2 I'm glad that we are, you know, I think, thinking along
3 those lines. But we can't rely on something two, four
4 years from now that might be there for us or might not
5 to protect our environment given all of the threats and
6 all of the risks that we're facing with climate change
7 and, frankly, in our local communities across our state.
8 You know, when I -- I was born and raised in
9 Connecticut; and when people come here -- I'm not a
10 religious person -- but they say that this is God's
11 country, and I really believe it's because of the trees
12 and -- so the little actions add up. If we're thinking,
13 It's okay to cut down a few trees, it's okay to cut down
14 a few acres of trees, over time that adds up. And even
15 in West Hartford -- one of the richest and most
16 beautiful communities, very similar to
17 Wethersfield -- the tree cutting that is taking place is
18 really changing the character of our communities. And
19 for anyone who's lived here, we love it. We love the
20 beauty of our communities, and that is worth protecting.
21 So thank you very much and thank you for having
22 me here in Wethersfield.
23 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Andrew.
24 ANDREW MINIKOWSKI: Hi, everyone. I'm Andrew
25 Minikowski, and I'm here toning representing the

1 Connecticut Fund for the Environment. We're a statewide
2 environmental nonprofit organization. If you don't know
3 about our work, come up and talk to me afterwards, learn
4 how you can get involved.
5 First, I'd like to thank the Connecticut Airport
6 Authority and its consultants for hosting this meeting
7 tonight. There is a rich panoply of opinions that have
8 been expressed, and that's good for democracy. So thank
9 you, everyone here, for coming out as well.
10 First, I'd like to start specifically in the
11 presentation we all saw that based on public comment at
12 the last meeting, the airport authority has taken into
13 account the City of Hartford's Tree Ordinance, which
14 requires one-for-one replacement. That's a great thing.
15 Unfortunately, that's a boon for Hartford, not for
16 Wethersfield, where another city or municipal tree
17 ordinance does not apply. I would request that the
18 airport authority could explore options either with
19 nonprofit groups or community groups to institute a
20 one-for-one replanting program in Wethersfield, either
21 to the affected area with "right tree, right place"
22 methodology or elsewhere in the community.
23 Now, more broadly, I'd just like to point out
24 that I have now read the draft report too much; and the
25 law is clear in this area. The agency is required to

1 take a, quote, hard look at the impacts; and that has
2 been the understanding of the policy laws since 1973.
3 This is nothing new. Now, there is a complete lack of
4 data underlying many of the conclusions. Other folks
5 have pointed that out tonight. I don't need to say it
6 again. I would really request that the airport
7 authority and its consultants go back and do more site
8 visits, collect more data. That can't hurt. A better
9 informed decision is a better decision overall.
10 Also the agency is required to review feasible
11 and prudent alternatives. That has been done but in a
12 way that is quite self-fulfilling. You have two
13 radically, extreme straw arguments that are thrown out
14 at either end and then a preferred alternative. Please,
15 look at the gradients in-between. See if there is a
16 plan that fits perfectly to address both airport safety,
17 which is a laudable and necessary public objective, and
18 the preservation of the trees in this area.
19 Other folks have expressed tonight -- and it's
20 sort of a new thing I've been hearing following this
21 issue -- that there is a suspicion that there are
22 ulterior motives here. To quote the late Supreme Court
23 Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Sunlight is the best
24 disinfectant."
25 So an open process is a better process. Keep

1 people engaged. Provide more information. And everyone
2 will come away richer for it.
3 In conclusion, we live in one of the most
4 densely populated states in the country; yet 57 percent
5 of our state is covered in tree growth. That's pretty
6 remarkable. This is our collective heritage. Let's not
7 let it go to waste carelessly.
8 Thank you.
9 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Jim Woodworth.
10 JAMES WOODWORTH: I'm from -- I'm proud to
11 represent -- to be a member of the Great Meadows
12 Conservation Trust and to spread the word about the
13 recent official designation of the Great Meadows as an
14 Important Bird Area. The IBA designation is a
15 recognition of the varied habitat areas, including, of
16 course, the floodplain forest which extends right up
17 into Hartford and East Hartford.
18 Long before the Important Bird Area program
19 began an area of, quote, Connecticut River's shore and
20 bottomland was set aside, quote, to be preserved in its
21 natural state without change or use or improvement other
22 than dike maintenance as a refuse for wildlife along the
23 river, said property to be known as the Folly Brook
24 Conservation Area. This is from a resolution introduced
25 in 1956 by Ms. Elizabeth Knox, Hartford City

1 councilwoman. Under the sponsorship of the Wethersfield
2 Cove Association, the Hartford Bird Study Club, and the
3 Wethersfield Garden Club. Though she's not named in the
4 resolution, we Wethersfield residents recognize the hand
5 of young Eleanor Buck Wolf in every one of those
6 organizations.
7 In 1961, they commissioned a scientific study of
8 the Folly Brook Conservation Area. It was conducted by
9 William Niering, renowned botanist of Connecticut
10 College and Frank Egler. The study was never published,
11 but the draft of this study is preserved in the archives
12 of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust, available on
13 line too, which itself is founded in 1968 in Eleanor
14 Wolf's kitchen looking out at the cove. The botanists
15 returned in 1969 to document the havoc reeked on the
16 Folly Brook Conservation Area by the construction of
17 I91, quote, bisecting it and destroying one of the
18 finest heron rookeries in the floodplains.
19 Well, Betty Knox died in 1966. Her legacy lives
20 on in the Knox Foundation. Eleanor Wolf lived into her
21 90s and was witness to the, quote from the Hartford
22 Courant, embarrassing fiasco involving illegal tree
23 cutting near Brainard Airport, carried out by you know
24 who. Thanks to Eleanor's efforts, the illegal activity
25 came to a halt just after the trees were cut but not

removed so the spring fresh carried them down the stream.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute.

JAMES WOODWORTH: How sad for Eleanor to witness the natural area she and Betty Knox had tried to preserve was again subject to the insult from DOT.

On the other hand, wouldn't they be pleased to know in recent years eagles had established two nests, ospreys, and so forth, and the great blue heron had re-established their rookery.

So that brings us to the tree cut -- to the tree obstruction removal plan, which they are trying to be legal by hiring these guys to go through the process correctly; but, frankly, their plan is still in an embarrassing fiasco or -- because they could have a plan to manage the floodplain forest. They could encourage the black willows that grow along the shore but don't grow so tall to fill in where -- in place of the cottonwoods and the maples that are intruding into the airspace. They could plant some of the --

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Three minutes.

JAMES WOODWORTH: They could plant some of the shrubbery that was in there too, the elderberry and so forth. So in the floodplain forest management plan, you would have trees that only got so tall. And I would

have to say, Where the heck have you been for the last 10 years? because those trees have been there 20 years -- I mean 20 feet above and our obstruction, and this is -- process is going to take a long time too. So, anyway, develop a floodplain management plan and come back and talk to us.

Thank you.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Jane Condron.

JANE CONDRON: Hi. I don't live in Old Wethersfield; but I don't live far from it, and I do believe Wethersfield is Tree City U.S.A., if we're still called that.

So the last tree battle I had was with the tree trimming people after the series of storms we had; and I think all of us are a little bit skittish about having any tree trimming especially when it's referred to as "tree trimming" or "selective clearing" or whatever, which I think we can all see what those results could end up, as happened to my neighbors before I threw myself in front of my tree and stopped them. They have a goal post, and I have a nice peach.

The point that I want to raise -- I think most of us have already covered most of them -- is that there is so much at risk here, so much at stake here. Despite what the slides show, trees don't just pop up and grow

1 right back. We saw green in that slide, yeah, and maybe
2 some little trees; but to replace full-grown trees, it
3 takes a very long time to do that.
4 I understand there are safety concerns. I have
5 also done a lot of research; and the FAA does say that
6 the pilots are supposed to fly over the river and avoid
7 the south and the west because it's a noise-sensitive
8 and populated area.
9 So the other thing I want to raise is for me
10 personally -- oh, no. Let me go back to this.
11 The Connecticut River is an American Heritage
12 River. That's the designation it was given. I don't
13 know how many years ago. It does have that. So it's
14 not just about the trees over near the dike, near the
15 airport. Below that -- immediately south of that is Old
16 Wethersfield, as we've all talked about. But below that
17 is the Great Meadows, which is a fragile ecosystem; and
18 it's to our benefit that it's still intact the way it is
19 because it does absorb the floods that we experience
20 most years. The trees do that as well. We need all the
21 flood retention systems we can get. We've learned that
22 with hurricanes that we've seen on television, if not
23 experienced ourselves.
24 Clean water, clean air that we have now took
25 many decades to get to. I'm old enough to remember a

lot of that battle, and I remember when you couldn't go near the Connecticut River because you were afraid of what you might catch or it was just disgusting.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute.

JANE CONDRON: How much?

STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute.

JANE CONDRON: Okay. Thanks.

So that's something.

Again, environmental regulations are more at risk right now. We have to keep that in mind.

I also did some research on a master plan, and I saw one of the greater master plans from, I think, 2015. And it did talk about an extension of the runway, so I think that's another thing. We're serious about the trees and serious about the motivation behind this new project; but, hopefully, we can reach some solution.

Thanks.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Melissa.

MELISSA WAGNER-PAVICK: Hello. My name is Melissa Wagner-Pavick. I live in Wethersfield. I'm a mom, a teacher, and I run a school gardening program in Hartford. And I'm deeply concerned about environmental conservation and sustainability, now more than ever, as Lisa Galinski touched upon.

The proposed cutting of trees, in my opinion, in

this incident seems extreme given the size and any kind of positive impact that Brainard Airport might have on our community.

Removing obstructions that affect pilot visibility or how they can manage their airplanes, of course, seems reasonable; but 30 acres of trees in Wethersfield alone seems extreme and poses real questions of transparency in the intention with the airport.

Just in case we need reminders, trees increase air quality, lower air and water temperature, reduce noise pollution, reduce wind-related damage. They mitigate soil issues, water issues; and they protect all of our natural ecosystems that protect insects, animals, and plants.

In summary, I am deeply opposed to the tree clearance tonight; and I wholeheartedly support natural, undeveloped spaces in and around Wethersfield.

And I also am curious to why the emergency -- with organs -- I forgot what it's called. Lifestar, that's not being used on hospitals anymore? I'm just questioning that anyway.

Thank you.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: Bob Morande.

ROBERT MORANDE: Hi. Bob Morande. I'm with the

Hartford Jet Center. I'm a U.S. Navy veteran. When I got out of the Navy in 1964, I started flying at Hartford Brainard Airport under the GI bill. I got all my wings, and I've been flying there ever since. I buy and sell airplanes, I fly jets, everything.

When I started flying at Brainard Airport, there wasn't any trees that we're talking about tonight. It was just the dike because that was put up there after the flood. And then the State started planting some trees there. I've been there long enough where every so many years they have to trim the trees.

Now, I've got a picture here that you all have in the handouts, and I'm very curious -- if you look at the other runway, Runway 29, there's a whole host of trees along the highway, along 91 -- one of the young ladies mentioned earlier -- and now further over here, those trees are all gone. The MDC took them down. I have never been to any hearing where the MDC asked for permission from the City of Hartford or from the State or the DEEP to take them down. That's where I'm confused.

Now, it is a severe safety issue, and all we're trying to do -- I'm -- not me, but I'm thankful the CAA and their people are coming up with this study because we've got to trim those trees down. Not take them all

1 down. I don't want to take trees down.
2 I used to live in Wethersfield for a while. I
3 live in Cromwell now, and I play golf there for an old
4 fart like me; but, again, as I said, one of things
5 I -- I just want to add before my three minutes is up is
6 Hartford Brainard Airport trains a lot of pilots. The
7 State of Connecticut spent millions of dollars a few
8 years ago to build a school down at the other end of the
9 airport right below the control tower. They're training
10 mechanics. Those mechanics before they even graduate
11 get jobs at Pratt & Whitney, all over the place, because
12 of such a severe shortage of pilots and mechanics. More
13 so pilots than there are mechanics.
14 But, again, as I said, I've been flying there
15 for well over 50 years. I've seen a lot of things.
16 I've been misquoted by some people at some of these
17 meetings saying we're going to have over 100,000
18 takeoffs and landings. Well, if some of you'd been
19 around in the '80s, we had 150,000 takeoffs and landings
20 there. That airport was very vibrant back then. It's
21 still vibrant. We have a lot of employees that have
22 been there for many, many, many years; and we do pay a
23 lot of taxes to the City of Hartford.
24 We have asked Mayor Luke Bronin to come down to
25 the airport because we're trying to put together an

1 airport enterprise zone to develop some of the areas
2 outside of the airport to bring more jobs.
3 PAUL McDONNELL: Three minutes.
4 BOB MORANDE: How much?
5 PAUL McDONNELL: We're at three minutes now.
6 BOB MORANDE: We are? Okay. I'm done.
7 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Beth Standish.
8 BETTY STANDISH: Hi. I'm Betty Standish.
9 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Oh, Betty. Sorry.
10 BETTY STANDISH: I live in Old Wethersfield.
11 Everybody said it all very eloquently. I just have two
12 things to say.
13 Representative Fonfara mentioned -- asked if
14 there was going to be expansion. And I have to think
15 that that's exactly what is going on here. The 43
16 million annually contributed to the economics of this
17 whole thing must mean something. This is a cash cow. I
18 mean, the growth -- they want to grow, and they want to
19 bring in 100 -- what? -- 100 flights a year
20 or -- 100,000 flights a year. I have to think that you
21 really need to look at what jet fuel does. Jet fuel is
22 toxic on takeoff and landing; and the incidence of
23 breast cancer is off the charts in Connecticut and
24 especially in Wethersfield. And, you know, to spend a
25 lot of time outside, you have to think about it for

yourself, you know, the garden center people, garden club people, children, everybody else. So that's just another thing.

Thank you.

DEBORAH COLON: Hi. I'm Debra Colon. I live on Church Street here in town. As mentioned before, most of the people who came and spoke before me have covered all of the things I could have spent five hours on, so thank you.

I do just want to say that our environment now -- not just here in Wethersfield or Connecticut but certainly nationally -- is under attack; and I would really hope that any plan that goes forward, regardless of what it is, be as conservative as possible. I understand that there's a difference between removal and trimming. I hope that for the safety of our pilots -- and I do care about the safety of our pilots -- that it is trimming and not removal that will be the plan. To that -- to that possibility I'm really concerned.

I have a question about what the plans are for oversight once any work will begin. You know, we talked about, yes, there will be plans for making sure that the bald eagle nests aren't disturbed. Who's going to be responsible for making sure that that follow-through

1 happens? Who is going to make sure that only the
2 designated trees are going to be trimmed, not removed?
3 I hope that there would be a citizen component to
4 whatever group of people is determined to have that
5 oversight; and that's a question that I'd really like
6 answered quickly.
7 And then also -- I may have misheard. And you
8 may want to respond; although, I know you're not
9 answering general questions. When Senator Fonfara first
10 raised the issue of the possibility of the expansion of
11 the airport, I believe your response was, Well, that was
12 something that could be discussed with elected officials
13 but not with the general public. Am I correct?
14 PAUL McDONNELL: I don't understand the
15 question.
16 DEBORAH COLON: Okay. My -- and you may correct
17 me. My impression was that any discussion about the
18 possible expansion of the airport would not be discussed
19 with general citizens here but would only be discussed
20 at another time with our elected officials. If that is
21 true, I simply need to raise an absolute objection to
22 that. We are the people who need all of that
23 information, along with other elected officials.
24 Believe it or not, we are very lucky here in
25 Wethersfield. Our elected officials and we work

1 together.
2 So thank you very much.
3 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Helena Reilly.
4 HELENA REILLY: Hi. I'm Helena Reilly. I live
5 here in Old Wethersfield. I walk the cove almost every
6 day. I love the cove. Everyone has said it all very,
7 very well and I think everyone who has spoken, whatever
8 your opinion.
9 I just want to reenforce a concern that if these
10 trees are cut down there just doesn't seem to be enough
11 thought and attention to mitigation; and as some people
12 are saying, you can't get it back. But it just seems
13 that the result is that those of us who not only live
14 here, but the many, many people who come here to enjoy
15 Old Wethersfield -- we are suffering a deprecation in
16 our quality of life. And I don't see what the remedy is
17 for that and -- so I hope that that will be a part of
18 this; and, clearly, we need a lot more planning to make
19 this all work.
20 Thank you.
21 STEPHANIE PARSONS: Alyssa Peterson.
22 ALYSSA PETERSON: Thank you. Good evening. My
23 name is Alyssa Peterson. I am a resident of the South
24 End of Hartford, and I wanted to come out tonight.
25 I was so impressed. Mr. Dillon, your

1 consultants have really altered the report from its
2 first iteration. I don't know how many of you attended
3 the Rocky Hill meeting. I don't know if you read the
4 comments or what happened; but that was public advocacy
5 in action. It worked. You -- your -- those of you who
6 commented to your -- I really need to commend you. We
7 commended you at the Hartford meeting that you made
8 changes and substantial changes; and the deforestation
9 isn't nearly as bad.
10 In Hartford we heard from Mr. Woodworth from
11 the --
12 JAMES WOODWORTH: Conservancy.
13 ALYSSA PETERSON: Yeah. That's where you're
14 from.
15 He suggested -- it was a great plan. He
16 suggested if you remove the trees, plant slow-growing
17 and low-growing trees. We advocate for that in
18 Hartford.
19 We do have an ordinance in Hartford that allows
20 us if you take out a tree, you've got to put a tree
21 back. The Knox Foundation asks if they could be
22 involved to do the tree planting back. We advocate for
23 that.
24 So I don't know if you're aware of this or not,
25 but there's been so much negativity in the news about

Hartford. Everybody is down on Hartford for our finances, our situation, our public safety, our murders, our fires, MDC, what have you, whatever you want to say. There's a lot of negativity. I'm sorry about the negativity around this project. I'd like there not to be.

I am committed to the noise abatement. I'm going to start attending those meetings. We need to have -- we really need to get the airport to commit to coming over the river, end of story. We need to make that mandatory. That will help the noise abatement, I think, more than anything else.

So I'd like to advocate for whatever cutting is necessary. It is a public safety issue for us. Hartford does not need another negative story. We don't have the zoning abatement. We don't have the -- not abatement. We don't have the enforcement officials. We don't have health officials. We don't police officials. You all just saw what happened at the convention center with that public health scare. So, truly, this is a public safety issue for us. Let's cut the trees. We don't need to -- trim the trees. Let me be careful. Trim the trees where necessary. That's all. We are asking for the least amount of tree cutting, least amount. In Hartford we support putting trees back that

are slow growing and low growing, and I think we need to work together on this.

This is the last thing I'd like to show you is -- this is a fantastic report that was produced by the legislature. It's not Republican. It's not Democratic. It does show how we in Hartford can use this as an economic development engine for us. We all know we need tax base in Hartford. So there is a lot of support for the airport. You may not realize it. I am one of those who do support it, but I do support smart growth. And it's not growth. The airport did have over -- almost 50,000 takeoffs and landings many years ago. Now it's at 53,000, according to this report.

So I just want to be clear with our language that we're using.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute. Sorry.

ALYSSA PETERSON: We're not -- thank you. We're not advocating growth of the airport. We're advocating development of the area around it; and we certainly support smart tree trimming, smart tree growth, and some kind of working relationship between Hartford and Wethersfield.

Thank you.

FRANK SENA: Thank you. My name is Frank Sena. My wife Mary and I have been residents of Wethersfield

for 47 years. Who knew? That catches up with you. Anyways, I thought the presentation was terrific, by the way. I thought it was well presented. I thought the questions and the responses from our group here were very well thought out.

I have background in demographics, marketing, and trends -- trending and -- so when Senator Fonfara -- and I remember you when you came to our house many years ago when you were soliciting and you were running for office -- raised a great question, which your response was technically correct. The issue of what is the longer strategic plan of Brainard field is really not the topic for tonight. However, I think that it's my ultimate response because Senator Fonfara's question begs a more strategic view of what's happening, not just the trees.

Now, I'll give an example, and this is not my opinion and it is not a false fact. Okay. In the aircraft frame business, Bowing, major aircraft builders in the engine business, Pratt & Whitney, in particular, there is a trend towards smaller aircraft, commuter aircraft: 20, 30, 40 passengers with smaller engines. Many of those manufacturers are coming out of South America. And the reason for that is that there will continue to be sustained and increasing growth of air

travel in the United States.

Now, airport planners and state and federal planners understand that it is simply too expensive to rebuild airports. Look what's going on at Bradley Airport with the first terminal. It's been years and years and years. So the trend now is towards regional airports and landing those commuter aircraft in major airports. Now, I'll quote from Page 4 of the slide. The airport -- Hartford-Brainard -- is a public-use regional airport of state and national importance.

Okay. Well, here's a fact. Okay. wwwfaa.gov -- you can -- you don't have to write that down. There are two reports in here. One is called -- it's faa.govmedia.

STEPHANIE PARSONS: One minute. Sorry.

FRANK SENA: Okay. It's III B2, the Land-Use Compatibility At Airports by the FAA. The other is called the New England Regional Airport System Plan. These are already documents, and you can see them online under faa.gov. I'm not going to make any comments on them. You should read them, but you should understand that that is the trend and -- so this question before us tonight really is a portend of future plans by the FAA. So food for thought.

Thank you.

PAUL McDONNELL: That's the end of the list of people that signed up to speak, but we do have time and we can -- just by raising your hand you can come up and speak.

Sir, why don't you come up and state your name when you get here.

JUDY KEANE: Hi. I'm Judy Keane, and I live on the Broad Street Green, otherwise known as the approach for Brainard Airport.

I -- this is one of my big issues is the intrusion of these planes and our privacy in our quiet in Old Wethersfield, which is a pristine area that should be expanded for historical appreciation.

Years ago I came to a meeting with Brainard Airport to complain about the flights and was told that at that time that the FAA has no control over where the pilots go so that's why they fly over Old Wethersfield rather than the river. And now I'm skeptical because the FAA is saying it's unsafe for the pilots to fly into Brainard Airport unless they fly over the river; so there's no enforcement, and that's one of my big issues.

You know, the planes are low, scary, and I truly believe that -- and I'm not sure if this is true. I truly believe that the flight school is having them shut off the engines and restart them in the air over Old

Wethersfield because it sounds like that to me when I'm trying to have a quiet moment.

Thank you.

THOMAS SURVICH (spelled phonetically): Thank you. Tom Survich. I've been in Wethersfield since 1975. I live down by the cove. I Ezekiel Porter Road, Kelly Avenue, sound barrier 91.

My biggest complaint is over here you've heard, oh, pilot's are supposed to come in over the river. Hogwash. They come over our house every day, every day. My wife last week called the airport four times, planes flying over the airport. As far as I'm concerned, Bradley Airport can go away. Okay.

Cutting the trees is going to make it worse coming over Old Wethersfield, believe me. They're supposed to come over the river now and they don't.

That's all I have to say.

PAUL McDONNELL: Are there any other speakers?

DORIS STAMOS: I'm Doris Stamos. I live on Old Main Street down by the cove, and I was hoping somebody else would bring this up so that I wouldn't have to get up here.

I live in a house that was built in the 1700s, and the planes are flying over us every single day as Tom said. Not only do we have the noise -- and I'm sure

other people feel -- we have vibrations all the time; and I really worry about the integrity of the house after a while with all of this every single day. We are in an historic district. To me that is something that is very important, and perhaps we need to go further in getting help from the Historic District Commission on this as well.

Thank you.

DOUG OVIAN: Hi. My name is Doug Ovian. And everybody has made a lot of great remarks both for and against this project. And I just want to say I had the great fortune to grow up with Alyssa Peterson in the Farmington Valley; and we're two examples of folks who came to the inner suburbs or the city itself because we're so proud to be a part of this community that we call Greater Hartford. So I really liked what she had to say, and I think we need to be respectful of our Hartford neighbors and proud of our delegation crossing the border between Hartford and Wethersfield in trying to find the best solution for the issues we face here.

So I have noted that what Mr. Morande said about the cutting between the MDC project, which I drive by and think that's a sign of clean water for the Connecticut River; but I have a feeling many other people drive by and think of it as an increasing

1 encroachment towards our Wethersfield Cove and the need
2 for a buffer where there wasn't really much there
3 before; but there's certainly nothing now between the
4 highway and the very closest pools and treatment areas
5 that are under construction. I don't know if the MDC
6 plan includes mitigation in plantings and buffer there;
7 but, certainly, anything that we would use for
8 mitigation I wouldn't mind seeing on that side of 91 as
9 well.
10 And I also would just ask those who have ever
11 seen Phil Lohman's map of imaginary Wethersfield in
12 years to come of a river walk along -- from the Putnam
13 Bridge to the cove that -- maybe the commercial
14 orientation of that is something that would be
15 uncomfortable for those who wish for the river to remain
16 undeveloped; but I think there are many people that
17 would like the idea that the river walk trail from
18 Riverfront Recapture, which is anticipated to eventually
19 reach our town, that we would have something like what
20 Hartford and East Hartford have and -- so maybe there's
21 some way to create access, to create safety, to create
22 more barriers for privacy and encourage any further
23 development of the airport to really take the flight
24 paths over the river.
25 I -- one of my neighbors is somebody who grew up

with a lot of interest in planes. I would think Mr. Rell might have something to add to this conversation as well, and I just know that compared to when we first moved to town there is less activity than there used to be. It's kind of a -- in some ways that's a good thing. On the other hand, that's maybe not such a good thing for Hartford.

And then, finally, I would just say, if you've ever lived in Washington or been to San Diego, airports along rivers are, kind of, something that were developed a long time ago; and nowadays we tend to think of them better in places like where Bradley is.

So I agree with my neighbor Cindy when she says that we really should look at the future of the airport first.

Thank you.

PAUL McDONNELL: Anyone else interested in speaking?

THOMAS MAZZARELLA: Hi. I'm Tom Mazzarella. I'm a Wethersfield resident.

In the report we saw three options: cut all the trees, don't cut any trees, or selectively cut the trees. I suggest the third option should be considered, and that's restrict the airport itself.

If I'm not mistaken, when you approach the

airport from the south over Wethersfield, it's an instrument-landing approach. The other three approaches are visual-landing approaches. I suggest that you eliminate the instrument-landing approach, which goes directly over Wethersfield. I believe the slope is more shallow and the approach tree line is wider. So if you eliminate that, you eliminate a lot of the tree cutting.

Secondly, that straight-in approach over Wethersfield is most desirable, I believe, to the corporate aircraft, the turbine engine aircraft and the noisier, faster aircraft. If you let the trees grow and have that obstruction, which can be noted on the approach charts. The pilots can get that information and say, You should avoid approaching from the south because of the obstructions. Take the clearer route and swing over the river. Eliminate the noise into Wethersfield as well. So I think that should have been included as an option in your study.

Thank you.

ROBERT O'CONNOR: I'm Rob O'Connor. I'm a recent transplant into trees, but I've been living in Old Wethersfield since June, coming up on a year.

One of the things I think -- I'm going to mentioned the word "democracy." Just a couple of comments on that. I'm happy that I've moved into a town

with such strong democratic people, democratic skills; and I'd like to advocate just for some things to do between now and the next iteration of a plan.

One thing is our town council here, I think we should pass a resolution or pass an ordinance for this tree remediation. Put one in our own town. There are a ton of things to do before the next menu of options.

Speaking of menu, I sat there thinking, this is like being offered, like, at a restaurant, like a steak, a nice pasta dinner, then just like a fried bologna sandwich. And you're like, you can't have that one. You can't have this one. So there's your bologna sandwich. I think we should be able to vote for this. I really think this should be a referendum. When a final plan comes out, there should be citizens involved in what it looks like; and let's put it up on the voting table like we're supposed to do in a democracy and not be told, Here's the thing -- here's the plan for you, and this is what you're going to get to go with.

So also people -- I do have -- I'm getting used to -- I grew up with four railroad tracks in New Jersey in my backyard, so the planes are -- I understand they're noisy but -- I also would advocate, call the airport hotline. People can do this now. Call every day, 20 times a day. Bug them until they do something

about it. And maybe we should make that a condition of even us looking at a plan. It's, like, get the planes out from over our homes; and then maybe we'll talk about trimming some trees. But I think we can do those things now and do them every day.

So that's it. Thank you very much.

DAN CHARTOFF (spelled phonetically): Hello. I'm Dan Chartoff, local resident. Just a couple quick things. Great comments tonight.

I didn't see a dollar sign anywhere on the presentation, what this is going to cost, who's going to pay for it, and the secondary cost.

A tree -- a study was performed in the last few years in West Hartford and found that the value of a tree has about $150 a year in benefits: storm water issues, wind breaks, shading in the summer, and reduction of the carbon -- oxygen and -- so I'd like to see a true presentation of what this is costing in dollars to remove the trees and what this is costing in dollars in the long range for supplementing those missing benefits from the trees.

And also the Slide 23, I think it was, on the environmental benefits, clearly, much more needs to be done there because 40 acres -- 30 acres of trees definitely has an impact, so that needs to be drilled

1 down more.
2 Thank you.
3 SUSAN BARTON: Going off of -- Hi. I'm Susan
4 Barton. I'm a resident of Old Wethersfield.
5 Going off the financial part of that, I just am
6 finding it hard to believe -- I just pulled up Google
7 Maps. I'm not the pilot. I'm not going to say I know
8 anything about aviation. I just want answers as to why
9 we can't shift the runway a little bit to go over less.
10 And someone feel free to answer because I don't know the
11 answer. I'm just posing some options here.
12 But it's going to be expensive to do all the
13 tree removal, and I don't see why we can't move a
14 manmade obstruction to prevent the destruction of
15 natural resources. So that option needs to be looked
16 at; and we need an answer to that for those of us who
17 don't know the answer because I'm a midwife. I don't
18 fly planes.
19 So thank you.
20 PAUL McDONNELL: Any other person?
21 And people who have spoke already are allowed to
22 speak again.
23 CHRISTIE SULKER-PUTNAM (spelled phonetically):
24 Hi. I'm Christie Sulker-Putnam. I'm a Wethersfield
25 resident. I just wanted to say a little bit about the

process because many of the environmental issues have been covered.

I was here at the first meeting, and I think unfortunately this process really got off on the wrong foot. The first meeting felt like a frank attempt to disenfranchise Hartford residents. It felt like an attempt to kind of keep this all under the radar, and I think that that was exactly the wrong way to handle this.

I still have questions about the relationship between the consultants and the CAA. It seems like a real conflict of interest where the consultants are paid by exactly the entity that would benefit from the tree clearing. It feels like stakeholders really haven't been involved in any of the decision making towards this and -- so I would ask that the CAA engage with the town directly to talk to us about the larger strategic plan for the airport and to clarify the relationship between the consultants and the CAA and the stakeholders, etc.

And I totally second that idea about getting that tree ordinance on the books pronto.

Thank you.

JAMES WOODWORTH: I'm thinking I may be the only person that's been in the floodplain forest including a recent trip at the north end where, to answer your

1 question about -- the runway goes like this. If you go
2 like this, it goes right into the trash to energy plant,
3 so it can't be done.
4 But we also -- I also looked at the floodplain
5 forest in that section. That's Area 1, I think, or
6 whatever; but there's a bunch of stumps -- pretty good
7 size maple stumps about this big; and each one of them
8 has four sprouts, 6 inches by 40 feet. So the tree
9 cutting plan of whenever the heck they cut that, here we
10 are again and -- so why don't you have a floodplain
11 forest management plan that's ongoing? Why is there
12 20 feet of tree protruding into the airspace required by
13 FAA, as you mentioned, and you haven't cut it yet? And
14 you're not going to cut it right away because you don't
15 have a floodplain forest management plan so -- and
16 first -- for one thing, you should cut none of those
17 trees all the way down to the ground. You should cut
18 the top off, whatever you can do with whatever cherry
19 pickers you can get in there; and then girdle the tree
20 and kill it because -- so it becomes a snag. A snag is
21 floodplain forest habitat for woodpeckers -- first of
22 all, the bugs and then the woodpeckers and then the tree
23 sparrows and then maybe the wood ducks, if they make a
24 big enough hole.
25 And you could have a program -- I mean, you'd

1 have to get the professionals in there (a) to consult to
2 actually development the plan. Then you need to get the
3 professionals in to design your plan. I tried to go out
4 and visit there with one of your people with Jean
5 Loewenstein; and she says, Oh, no. We're not ready to
6 go visit that place.
7 Show me which trees you're going to cut down and
8 which you aren't.
9 Well, you don't have a plan. You call it a
10 plan. As everybody says, you got that smorgasbord with
11 the impossible and the whatever but -- so that's the
12 important thing and -- so -- and the other part
13 of -- the ongoing plan could be managed by the Knox
14 Foundation with a bunch of kids. Imagine the publicity
15 you could get.
16 You know, last week there was the tree that
17 fell -- the airplane that went into the trees in
18 Ellington. That happened on the -- at the moment I
19 walked into the Bulkeley High School hearing. And the
20 FBI taking the records out of the flight school.
21 But imagine an article ongoing, annually more or
22 less, on the front page of the Hartford Courant with a
23 bunch of happy teenagers smiling in the floodplain
24 forest sweating, and swatting mosquitos, learning about
25 the floodplain forest, learning about nature, and

1 actually maintaining that forest.
2 And, furthermore, I disagree with -- you've
3 got -- you've got Riverfront Recapture all along the
4 river, but this is a floodplain forest. You know why
5 it's there and not ruined by something else? Because
6 there's a dike and an airport. If it weren't
7 there -- if the dike and the airport didn't have the
8 fence, you wouldn't have a floodplain forest that eagles
9 could build nests in, that heron rookery came back to
10 after 50 years. So you can -- you may be able to
11 develop it, but you've got to protect that area; so
12 that's got to be part of that strategic plan, whether
13 it's an airport or not, if you want to maintain the
14 integrity of the floodplain forest.
15 Anyway, thanks.
16 PAUL McDONNELL: Is there anyone that hasn't
17 already spoken? Is there anyone who would like to speak
18 even if you have spoken?
19 That's all. I'll turn it then to Stephanie to
20 wrap it up.
21 STEPHANIE PARSONS: At this point we would -- we
22 will formally conclude the hearing. Thank you so much
23 for attending. Again, comments will be accepted on this
24 document until May 22nd of this year.
25 Have a great rest of your night and have a safe

1 trip home.

2 (The hearing adjourned at 9:14 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 STATE OF CONNECTICUT:

3 COUNTY OF HARTFORD:

4 I, Jennifer Still, Licensed Shorthand Reporter and

5 Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified, do

6 hereby certify that the preceding testimony was reduced

7 to writing by me; and that it is a true record of the

8 testimony given.

9 I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel

10 for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties to

11 the action in which this deposition is taken, and

12 further that I am not a relative or employee of any

13 attorney employed by the parties thereto or financially

14 interested in the action.

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my

16 hand this 22nd day of May, 2017, at Plainfield, Connecticut.

17

18

19

20 _____
Jennifer Still

21 Licensed Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public
My Commission Expires August 31, 2020

22 License No. 0000301

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24

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# APPENDIX E
# COMMENTS / RESPONSES

## Municipal and Government Comments and Responses

- Town of Wethersfield, Jeff Bridges, Wethersfield Town Council – January 30, 2017
- City of Hartford, Planning and Zoning, Sara Bronin, Chair, Planning & Zoning Commission – February 03, 2017
- City of Hartford, Department of Public Works, Thomas R. Baptist, Superintendent – February 06, 2017
- Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, David Fox, Senior Environmental Scientist – February 10, 2017
- City of Hartford, Mayor Luke Bronin – April 18, 2017
- State of Connecticut General Assembly Members, John Fonfara and Paul Doyle (State Senators), Russell Morin and Tony Guerrera (State Representatives) – April 27, 2017
- Town of Wethersfield, Jeff Bridges , Wethersfield Town Council – May 22, 2017

Responses have been prepared to address the subject comments and are included below. The responses include several clarifications, as well as concurrence to adhere to environmental best practices, regulations, and permits. Please note, many of the responses are related to activities that will occur in the future, during the design and permitting process.

For the convenience of the reader, both the comment and response are provided.

**Town of Wethersfield, Jeff Bridges, Wethersfield Town Council – January 30, 2017**

**Comment 1 (paragraph 2):**
The Council requests that all progress towards conducting the obstruction removal be halted until formal public hearings are held in both the Town of Wethersfield and City of Hartford. These hearings should be held in the evening to allow for the greatest possible attendance. Notices of these hearings should be posted and published in conspicuous locations including the official newspapers of both communities, the Town and City websites, the Connecticut Airport Authority Website, and other places of publication or notice as required by law or regulation.

***Response:*** *At the request of the of Town of Wethersfield, City of Hartford, and general public, three public **h**earings for this project were held on the following dates and locations:*
*April 18, 2017 at Bulkeley High School, Hartford 6:30 PM*
*April 19, 2017 at Glastonbury Town Hall 6:30 PM*
*April 27, 2017 at Wethersfield Town Hall 6:30 PM*

*Notices were sent to the Towns of Wethersfield, East Hartford and Glastonbury as well as the City of Hartford for posting on their websites/bulletin boards. The hearings were advertised in the Glastonbury Citizen, the Hartford Courant, the Rare Reminder and La Voz for the 3 weeks prior to the hearings.*

*It should be noted that prior to the public meeting held in the Town of Wethersfield on January 12, 2017, contact was made with the City and the Towns of East Hartford, Glastonbury, Wethersfield. Each Town was supplied with an electronic copy of the meeting notice and the meeting was advertised in both the Rare Reminder and the Hartford Courant. All notices included a link the project website, where the public*

*can access maps and reports related to the project.*

**<u>City of Hartford – Planning and Zoning Commission, Sara Bronin, Chair, Planning & Zoning Commission – February 3, 2017</u>**

**Comment 1 (3rd paragraph):**
We express concern with the proposal by the Connecticut Airport Authority to cut approximately 40 acres of trees in some of our most ecologically sensitive areas. The draft environmental assessment gives us no meaningful way to assess the scope of the proposed project, because it does not provide even an estimated number of trees and landscaping that would be affected. It does not appear to adequately address the concerns of migratory species and habitat, including of the two nesting bald eagles within the project area. In addition, the draft environmental assessment refers to Hartford's 2015 zoning code, which gives us great concern about the diligence demonstrated by the consultants. Far from being slated for industrial development, the majority of the land being targeted appears to be within the Connecticut River Overlay, the intent of which is incompatible with clear-cutting of large swaths of riverside trees. Moreover, the draft environmental assessment seems to willfully ignore the existence of residents within a half-mile of the project site. Relatedly, we disagree with the report's assertion that there will be "no" environmental justice concerns, when low-income residents, many residents of color, live very near the project site and will be affected by reduced air quality, increased airplane traffic and noise, and an increase in odors from the treatment facilities, currently filtered by trees. Finally, our inland wetland and watercourses regulation does not appear to be given proper consideration by the draft environmental assessment.

***Response:*** *In regards to zoning, language on Page 4-2 of the EA has been edited to reflect language in the zoning code dated December 2016 and the map dated April 2017:*

*"According to the Hartford Zoning Map, dated April 13, 2017 the Airport is zoned Industrial District (ID-1) with a Connecticut River Overlay. Properties located north of the Airport have the same zoning (ID-1 with Connecticut River Overlay) Lands to the east and adjacent to the Connecticut River are zoned Open Space (OS). Lands west of the Airport including west of I-91 are zoned as an Industrial District (ID-1). The purpose of the ID-1 industrial district in the city is to provide for medium to heavy industry characterized by a minimum of noise, odor, glare, and pollution, and by moderate traffic upon the public streets. It is the purpose of this district to encourage the continuance and expansion of industry of this kind and its creation, and to develop a more compatible relationship between such industry and surrounding residential areas. The closest residential districts are approximately 4000 feet north/northwest from the end of Runway 20 along Wawarme Avenue and include N-2-2 and NX-1. "*

*As has been stated in response to numerous queries and as stated in Section 2.0 of the Final EA, "the project purpose is to promote safety by bringing the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace",* ***not*** *to expand airport operations including activity levels, aircraft types or airport facilities. As a result no change in emission levels will occur. It should be noted that the CAA has no control over the operations (or odor created by) of the water treatment facilities operated by The Metropolitan District, or other nearby industrial facilities in the City of Hartford.*

*Furthermore, without changes in airport activity, airport facilities, and without any new development, the proposed project does not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. As the affected area will remain open and vegetated, the FAA and CAA do not consider the potential changes in oxygen and carbon*

*dioxide from tree obstruction removal to be substantial enough to impact area residents. As such, based on federal standards and practices, air quality and "environmental justice" impacts are not anticipated from this project. Please note that this conclusion is not intended to minimize the existing air quality and associated health concerns in the City of Hartford, or to local low-income and minority populations.*

*In regard to potential impacts to wetlands or watercourses, please note that prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of wetland delineations and functional assessment, soil and erosion controls, hydrological analysis, biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). At that time additional details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP Land and Water Resources Division and other agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).* The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), is a U.S. federal agency under the Department of Defense and a major Army command. The USACE is generally associated with dams, canals and flood protection in the United States, USACE is involved in a wide range of public works throughout the world.

*As such, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits. Tree removal methodologies to be used within upland areas, floodplains, forested wetland areas, and critical habitat areas, may differ, and will proceed as directed in any project permits.*

**Comment 2 (4th paragraph)**
We also would like to express concerns about the process. As the body that governs land use decisions made in the city of Hartford, we were not, to our knowledge, contacted by the Connecticut Airport Authority or its consultants. The January 12 public information session was held in Wethersfield, when it appears that over 90% of the project area is not only located in Hartford but owned by the City of Hartford. Indeed, although several of our members are interested in this topic, only one had the opportunity to attend the public information session held in Wethersfield, because of transportation issues and the public's very last-minute notice about the session.

***Response:*** *Please see in response to Comment 1 from the Town of Wethersfield.*

**Comment 3 (5th paragraph)**
The Commission recognizes that this project is still in the conceptual phase. Going forward, please note that approval from the City of Hartford, including the Mayor's office and City Forester, would be needed for any tree removals anticipated on City property and for any removals of significant trees within City limits. The Planning and Zoning Commission, which as noted above also functions as the Inland Wetlands Commission, may have to review activities proposed to be undertaken under the zoning regulations and the inland wetlands regulations. In addition, approval from this Commission may be needed under Connecticut General Statutes § 8-24. We do not with this letter intend to opine on the latter matter, but we feel that raising concerns now will assist with compliance with the intent and letter of the zoning regulations and other matters within our jurisdiction.

***Response:*** *The CAA is committed to working with the City of Hartford and the Connecticut Nature Conservancy as it relates to tree removal, and acknowledges the required city approvals and associated*

*ordinances, and zoning regulations. With regard to wetland regulations, as the project is needed to satisfy federally airspace requirements, and involves both federal and state funding, both USACOE and CTDEEP wetland permit requirements must also be address and satisfied. CAA has determined that State wetland permits will be necessary at a minimum.*

**<u>City of Hartford, Department of Public Works, Thomas R. Baptist, Superintendent – February 06, 2017</u>**

**Comment 1:**
The number of trees to be cut and/or removed is missing. This information is necessary to evaluate the ecological impact of the project, the biomass involved, the time and extent of disruption needed to perform the proposed work, and the amount of onsite and offsite remediation if required.

**Comment 2:**
Clarification is needed regarding the extent to which cut trees are to be removed from the site or left in place after cutting. Trees to be removed from the site will require extraction and transport, likely via large vehicles. The amount and quality of the wetland in which a large part of the work is proposed, and the likelihood of erosion of sediment from disturbed earth surfaces relating to any extraction of trees, requires evaluation in the assessment and certainly warrants the preparation of an erosion control plan and mitigation plan at the early stage of the project, trees left on-site after cutting may become navigation hazards during annual high-flow river conditions.

***Response to comments 1-2:*** *CAA concurs with these comments. Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of wetland delineations and functional assessment, soil and erosion controls, hydrological analysis, biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). At that time additional details regarding the number and size of specific trees to be removed and the site access, methodology used for their removal, and disposal will be thoroughly coordinated with the City of Hartford as well as the federal and state regulatory agencies. As such, tree removal methodologies including any restrictions on vehicles will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits. Tree removal methodologies to be used in upland areas, within critical habitat areas, and within forested wetland areas will differ and will proceed as directed in any project permits and approval from the City CAA acknowledges that the City is the property owner and authority over projects within its jurisdiction.*

**Comment 3:**
A description of any chipping/mulching work, the proposed location thereof, and routes of ingress and egress is needed and the potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.

**Comment 4:**
A description of any temporary filling, mat placement or other alterations necessary to accommodate access to work areas is needed and the potential impacts of such activities needed evaluation.

***Response to comments 3-4:*** *CAA concurs with these comments. Please see response to City of Hartford Department of Public Works comments 1-2 above, and refer to section 5.17 of the EA for a description of the removal methods. The use of BMP's for tree cutting in wetlands include the installation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation control measures, seasonal work restrictions (if applicable) to*

*breeding wildlife resources of conservation concern, and by felling timber in place with no or minimal harvest.*

**Comment 5:**
Vehicular access to the project area is an important environmental concern. A drawing and assessment of all vehicle ingress and egress to/from the work zones is needed. Use of the flood levee for this purpose may present engineering issues/concerns. Parking areas for contractors' vehicles and project equipment should be identified. The potential impacts of such activities needed evaluation.

***Response:*** *Ingress and egress for all vehicles accessing the site will be addressed during the design and permitting stage. All work will proceed in accordance with any required permits and regulations.*

**Comment 6:**
The location and assessment of any/all material stockpile areas is needed.

***Response:*** *As noted above, this will be determined during the design and permitting stage and all work will proceed in accordance with any required permits and regulations.*

**Comment 7:**
An assessment of any expected increase in aircraft use of the airport when the proposed work is completed should be included.

***Response:*** *As stated in Section 2.0 Purpose and Need of the EA and at the public hearings, this project is intended to promote safety by bringing the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace. There are no plans for expansion of any airport facilities; runways or otherwise. The project is unrelated to increases or changes in airport activity.*

**Comment 8:**
A description is needed of any herbicidal use, if any, to achieve the project goals, and the potential impacts of such activities need evaluation.

***Response:*** *Understood. It is not anticipated that herbicides will be used. However, chemical applications could be considered during the permitting process if determined appropriate and acceptable by the City of Hartford and federal/state agencies.*

**Comment 9:**
An evaluation of potential impacts on the known nest of bald eagle (EA, page 4-5) is needed. Tree cutting activity is proposed in the immediate vicinity of the nest (EA, Runway 2 Map), although the EA (page 5-10) says no cutting will occur within 660 feet of an "active eagle nest." The US FWS Bald Eagle Management Guidelines and Conservation Measures recommend avoiding timber harvesting activities during the nesting season within 660 feet (220 meters) of active and alternate nests (see https://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle/baea_nhstry_snstvty.html). (There are apparently two or more alternate eagle nests within the proposed project area.) Moreover, the Guidelines indicate that the nesting season includes both courtship and nest building, which normally occurs in the months of January and February in Connecticut, and further indicated that this is the "most sensitive period (during which eagles are) likely to respond negatively." Accordingly, tree removal within 660 feet of the nest may need to occur prior to January of the year. The EA fails to evaluate how tree cutting performed

between the months of December and March will affect the eagles' use of the known nest.

***Response:*** *Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, threatened or endangered species (federal and state), including the bald eagle. As nest sites and eagle populations are dynamic (and growing), past reviews will need to be updated. The schedule for tree removal activities will be refined to address the bald eagle and any other species of concern.*

**Comment 10:**
The number of operations (i.e., takeoffs and landings) described in the EA Section 1.2 (total 81,474) seems high. The total equate to 233 per day or 9.3 per hour or one every 6.5 minutes, day and night, year round. The number of operations is derived from data published by the FAA dated 2011. Is this data sufficiently current?

***Response:*** *More recent activity records for the airport have counted approximately 50,000 annual operations. The operational data were obtained from the air traffic control tower and is for informational purposes. The need for the project is not based on any specific or minimum number of operations.*

**Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, David Fox, Senior Environmental Scientist – February 10, 2017**

**Comment 1 (Paragraph 3):**
The Department is concerned about the extent of proposed tree removal, particularly within the Folly Brook Natural Area and along the banks of the Connecticut River and Folly Brook. Page 3-5 notes that FAA recognizes that off-airport clearing "is often impractical due to environmental impacts" and has defined a different approach surface, the Threshold Surface results in fewer penetrations, which should lead to reduced clearing.

***Response****: Correct, the Threshold Surface provides a steeper slope than the Approach Surface (for Runway ends 2), and the start location is based on the landing threshold (not the runway ends The Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative uses this difference to reduce the potential clearing as compared to the Full Obstruction Removal Alternative. However, an additional tree removal buffer was included in the recommendation to account for recent tree growth. As many comments have requested reducing the clearing area, including this CTDEEP comment, the CAA has reduced the recommended clearing by approximately 25% by removing some buffer areas from the recommendation. CAA concurs that further minimization is possible, and agrees to address this prior to advancing the project. This effort may include an updated tree elevation survey, as tree heights are dynamic and change over time.*

**Comment 2 (Paragraphs 4 and 5):**
The modified obstruction removal alternative, using this threshold surface criteria, has been chosen as the proposed action. However, the figure for the Runway 2 ended depicts the entire area between the dike and Folly Brook as a Tree Removal Area, not a Selective Removal Area, apparently meaning removal of all sizable trees as noted on page 3-6, irrespective of whether they are obstructions. While many trees near the dike are Threshold Surface obstructions, none of those depicted along Folly Brook or the Connecticut River are magenta dots. For example, the north bank of Folly Brook is approximately 2700' from the threshold end of Runway 2, so that a tree would have to be 135' tall to be an obstruction, since both locations have approximately the same ground elevation.

Overall, it appears that there would be a meaningful differential between the height of obstructions to the Threshold and the Approach Surfaces. The Folly Brook Tree Removal area ranges between 1600' to 2700' away from the threshold end and between 1200' to 2300' away from the runway end, so the difference in the surface heights between the 1:20 and 1:34 surfaces would be 45' to 67' (all numbers approximate). It would be instructive for reviewers if maps could be generated by using GIS data for ground elevation and Threshold or Approach Surface elevation that would depict the height of obstructions that would penetrate each of these surfaces at various locations.

***Response****: The area depicted in the Modified obstruction removal alternative includes a buffer to ensure the removal area is not underestimated. Reducing the area of removal following the EA is feasible; however, increasing the area due to recent tree growth could require re-evaluation of the study. As such, CAA will further evaluate reducing the removal area in the vicinity of Folly Brook. However, based on an off-set approach to Runway 2 over the river, trees along the Connecticut River's west bank may need removal to protect this procedure. Updated tree height survey will be needed for the development of the removal plans. CAA concurs that there is a meaningful differential between the height of obstructions to the Threshold Surface and the Approach Surfaces, and will work with CTDEEP to minimize the final removal area using current tree height data.*

**Comment 3 (Paragraph 6):**
Page 3-3 stats that the flood control dike is an Approach Surface obstruction. Since the dike is to remain, it appears that clearing trees, which are further removed from the runway, to the Approach Surface criteria would not provide a significant safety improvement, if planes had to be above the approach surface elevation to clear the dike just prior to landing.

***Response****: Correct, however the FAA still recommends clearing any approach surface penetration where feasible, as landing flight paths can vary based on winds, aircraft capability, pilot operations, and other variables. However, CAA agrees to advance this project with only addressing Threshold Surface penetrations to minimize the removals. CAA will work with the CTDEEP, and local municipalities as the project is advanced.*

**Comment 4 (Paragraph 7):**
Preserving vegetation along the banks of Folly Brook and the Connecticut River should be a primary factor in developing a tree removal plan. In accordance with the Inland Fisheries Division Riparian Corridor policy, the Department recommends that every effort be made maintain a 100-foot wide natural undisturbed riparian buffer adjacent to these waterbodies. See link for a copy of the policy: Riparian Corridor Policy. A significant riparian buffer adjacent to the river regulates water temperatures and minimized sedimentation into the river.

***Response****: Every effort will be made to meet the guidelines of the Riparian Corridor Policy along Folly Brook and the Connecticut River. As previously noted, as the project advances into the permitting phase, more detail regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CT DEEP and other regulatory agencies.* However, *locations where the Threshold Surface is penetrated within the 100' buffer will be recommended for removal; however, smaller trees, vegetation, and other measures will be discussed to provide a riparian buffer.*

**Comment 5 (Paragraph 8):**

As explained in the document, Folly Brook area is the subject of a conservation easement granted by the City of Hartford to The Nature Conservancy and the tree removal proposal will be developed that is acceptable to the conservancy. The Tree Management Plan developed as a result of the conservation easement includes two subareas, encompassing much of the Folly Brook area, where only "bona fide hazards" should be removed. The Department recommends that CAA limit tree clearing to the maximum extent possible to satisfy the least restrictive FAA safety standard, using the existing height of trees with some modest margin for reasonable growth.

***Response****: Agreed. As stated in Section 5.5 of the Final EA the CAA will follow the requirements of the 1990 Tree Maintenance Plan held between the City of Hartford and the Nature Conservancy.*

**Comment 6 (Paragraph 9):**
The nature of the forest cover should be explored. Are the trees approximately the same height, with a fairly uniform canopy, or are there individual trees that are significantly taller? Would removing a few taller trees effectively remove obstructions of the Threshold Surface or would widespread clearing be needed?

***Response:*** *This will be determined during field work associated with the design and permitting stage. At that time it can be determined the most effective method of removal including the number of trees balancing both safety issues, environmental concerns and regulatory requirements. CAA also intends to obtain new tree height data for use in the design effort.*

**Comment 7 (Paragraph 10):**
We also note that the figure for Runway 2 end depicts the Threshold Surface beginning near the runway end, not at the threshold end. An additional 200' would add 10' to the height of a potential obstruction. In addition, if there are a significant number of Threshold Surface obstructions, could extending the threshold even further back down the runway (i.e., modifying runway 'declared distances') eliminate or significantly reduce required clearing? What are the potential safety and aviation impacts of such a scheme?

***Response****: Because the Runway 2 has FAA published instrument flight procedures (the other runway ends do not), the Threshold Surface begins 200' before the landing threshold to provide a greater margin of safety during times of reduced visibility. Specifically, when visibility is reported between 1 and 3 miles, and/or cloud ceilings 400-500 feet above ground level. The depicted location of the Runway 2 Threshold Surface is per Federal design standards, and cannot be modified by CAA.*

**Comment 8 (Paragraph 11 and 12):**
All of the dots in the Tree Removal Area off the end of Runway 29, even those along the Connecticut River, are shown as Threshold Surface obstructions. The river is 1400' from the threshold end, which would make a 70' tall tree an obstruction. It appears that meeting even the more lenient safety standard would require removal of a significant fraction of the trees at this location. Again, if extending the threshold is not feasible, every effort should be made to retain as many trees and as much vegetative cover as possible in this riparian zone.

Similarly, the figure for Runway 20 depicts the great majority of trees as Threshold Surface obstructions. The Threshold Surface is also shown beginning 200' past the threshold end. In this case, the river is 1300' from the threshold end, which would make a 65' tall tree an obstruction. As with Runway 29, if extending

the threshold is not feasible, every effort should be made to retain as many trees and as much vegetative cover as possible in this riparian zone.

***Response**: Based on the short length of Runway 29 of 2,314 feet, and the existing 265' displaced threshold, only 2,049' remains available for landing on Runway 29. As such, further reduction in landing length could reduce safety for the aircraft that utilize this runway.*

*For Runway 20, CAA may be able to re-position the Threshold Surface at the landing point with approval of the FAA. Runway 20 is planned to provide a secondary instrument landing runway, which is why the surface begins 200' prior to the threshold. During the design phase of the project, it can be determined if FAA would allow clearing the surface positioned at the landing point of Runway 20 for the foreseeable surface.*

*For both Runways 29 and 20, CAA will work with CTDEEP to address methods to retain as many trees and as much vegetative cover as possible in the riparian zone.*

**Comment 9 (Paragraph 13):**
In discussing potential impacts to wetlands, the document describes a number of tree removal methods. The Land & Water Division recommends that, after NEPA review better defines the areal and quantitative extent of proposed tree removal, the CAA arrange a pre-application meeting to discuss which techniques would be employed at specific locations to minimize potential wetland impacts.

***Response**: Agreed, Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine* which techniques would be employed at specific locations to minimize potential wetland impacts. The meeting will also discuss *the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). This plan will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP Land and Water Resources Division and other agencies such as the ACOE. Thereafter, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits.*

**Comment 10 (Paragraph 14 and 15):**
Page 4-5 reports that a bald eagle nest used during the 2016 breeding season is within an area proposed for selective tree removal. However, the figure for Runway 2 depicts the nest 225' west of a tree removal (not selective) area. Page 5-9 notes the typical Fish & Wildlife Service's mitigation measure to maintain a 660' no disturbance zone around active nesting eagles. Though somewhat tolerable of human disturbance, the bald eagles will be negatively affected if work is too close to a nest or roosting site. Delineating protection zones around areas of high eagle use is important. The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) typically recommends the following:

**February 1st through August 1st (bald eagle breeding season)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around any nest site.
- If a bald eagle is found to be nesting on or within 660' of the project area, work shall be halted immediately until after the breeding season.

**December 31st through March 1st (wintering bald eagles)**

- Any machinery or equipment shall maintain, at a minimum, a 660' protection zone around areas

of high eagle use, particularly winter roosting sites."

Prior to initiating tree removal, it is recommended that CAA hire a qualified ornithologist to conduct surveys in the wooded areas at the end of Runways 2, 20 and 29 and develop a protection plan. The results of the surveys and the plan should be forwarded to the NDDB for their review.

**Response**: *CAA agrees to conduct surveys in the wooded areas at the end of Runways 2, 20 and 29, by a qualified ornithologist, and develop a bald eagle protection plan. The results of the surveys and the plan will be sent to the NDDB for review. Page 4-5 of the report will be revised to indicate that the bald eagle nest outside of the clearing area, but within 660' of the proposed for selective tree removal.*

**Comment 11 (Paragraph 16):**
With regard to bats and breeding birds, page 5-10 states: "based on other airport obstruction removal projects, direct impacts to these species may be avoided via use of seasonal restrictions (e.g., no tree cutting from May through August when these species are known to breed in New England). As such, significant impacts to critical species is not anticipated, as long as the winter owl roost is not disturbed. This conclusion will be reviewed by the USFWS and CTDEEP to determine if biological surveys and potential mitigation are necessary. In order to assure protection of these species, the Department recommends that this restriction be extended from April 1 through September 30.

***Response:*** *Comment noted. As the CTDEEP has requested in its review of the other CAA general aviation airports, tree removals will not occur during the period of April 1 to September 30.*

**Comment 12 (Paragraph 17):**
The document incorrectly identifies the 2015 *Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan* as the *Connecticut Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (CWCS). This matters in that the plan from 2005 was called the CWCS and utilization of the old name creates confusion as to which list of species of great conservation concern apply to the assessment. The document did reference 2015; however, this error should be fixed to eliminate confusion. The document provided an extensive review of forest interior birds, their habitat requirements and potential impacts, yet forest interior birds are unlikely to use the area for anything other than migration. While the analysis correctly states that the project area does not provide suitable habitat for these species. (Mitigation is most likely when observations of forest interior species were made within the project area.)

***Response****: This reference has been corrected in the document.*

**Comment 13 (Paragraph 18):**
Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed, regardless of project phasing, requires an NPDES permit from the Permitting & Enforcement Division. The *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities* (DEEP-WPED-GP-015) will cover these discharges. The construction stormwater general permit dictates separate compliance procedures for Locally Approvable projects and Locally Exempt projects (as defined in the permit). Locally Exempt construction projects, such as those undertaken by CAA, disturbing over 1 acre must submit a registration form and Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) to the Department. The SWPCP must include measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post construction stormwater management. The construction stormwater general permit registrations can now be filed electronically through DEEP's e-Filing system known as ezFile. Additional information can be

found on-line at: Construction Stormwater GP.

***Response:*** *Agreed, the CAA will submit a SWPCP during the design and permitting phase.*

**Mayor Luke Bronin – Testimony – April 18, 2017**

**Comment 1 -4 (Paragraph 2-5)**
While I am supportive of efforts to improve aviation safety, I remain concerned about the proposal in its current form. My understanding is that plan would result in the destruction of a large number of healthy trees, without a clear improvement in terms of safety.

Hartford's woodland areas are important to our City, and the area under consideration is of significant public value. Any changes to the land should be made for a defined public benefit, and after mitigation of potential harm. Many of the trees slotted for removal either play an important role in the ecological health of the Connecticut River, or support the habitats of several animal species, including our national emblem, the Bald Eagle.

I am also concerned about the equity of the plan in terms of public health. Hartford already has the highest rate of asthma-related emergency room visits in the state, and any assessment of the plan would be incomplete without a measure of how air pollution would be affected.

I urge the CAA to carefully consider and respond to the concerns raised by residents and environmental experts about the proposed plan.

***Response:*** *Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state).In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and these agencies. As such, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits.*

*CAA agrees and supports the City's goals to protecting wooded areas, and their public and ecological benefits, and intends to work with the City to further minimize the tree obstruction removals. The project is planned as a safety improvement, which is documented in Section 2 and 3 of the EA. Airspace and airport safety requirements are determined and established at the federal level, thus all public airports follow the same safety standards. As this project is being considered specifically to address FAA design standards, CAA and FAA consider it as a clear safety improvement.*

*In regards to the evaluation of public health, unlike a construction or development project, no additional impervious surfaces are being introduced, and no activities are planned within the removal area. The removal of trees has some effect on carbon dioxide and oxygen levels (measureable or otherwise), however the proposed action does not remove all trees; the remaining trees as well as underbrush will remain and continue to grow. As the project will not change airport activity or airport facilities, it does not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. As the area will remain open and vegetated, the FAA does not consider the tree obstruction removals to be substantial enough to impact air quality or area residents. As such, based on federal standards and practices, significant air quality and health impacts are not anticipated from this project. Please note that this conclusion is not intended to minimize the existing air*

*quality and associated health concerns in Hartford.*

**State of Connecticut General Assembly Members, John Fonfara (State Senator), Paul Doyle (State Senator), Russell Morin (State Representative), Tony Guerrera (State Representative) – April 27, 2017**

**Comment 1 (Paragraph 2)**
The plan has not been adjusted to reflect concerns that were raised by Wethersfield residents in January. Many residents spoke out against removing trees from the twenty acres of land located in Wethersfield because it would be environmentally irresponsible. These 20 acres of land are categorized as a floodplain forest. These forests have many benefits. Two of the most important include their ability to act as buffers between agricultural or urban areas and the state's water resources and the biologically diverse habitats they provide.

***Response:*** *As noted above, since the first public information meeting held on January, three public hearings were held in April. In addition the CAA has committed to a pre-permitting meeting with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and local municipalities.*

**Comment 2 (Paragraph 3)**
This parcel provides opportunities for recreational activities that many of our residents enjoy. With the removal of trees, the opportunities for recreational activity become diminished greatly.

***Response:*** *The removal of tree obstructions will not prevent recreational activities. Access will not be prevented or restricted (accept during the tree removal efforts).*

**Comment 3 (Paragraph 4)**
The Plan disregards the conservation easement that was put into place. This easement prevents the wholesale cutting of cutting trees. It is alarming to know that this easement is being ignored in the planning of this project.

***Response:*** *The conservation easement is identified, illustrated, and described in detail in Section 5.5 of the draft and final EA, including the associated Tree Removal Plan of 1990. The EA states that the proposed removal in the Conservation Easement will follow the associated requirements of the tree removal plan.*

**Comment 4 (Paragraph 5)**
Residents still do not have the answers to their questions from January regarding the tree removal process. When they presented their questions to CAA they were told that answers would be provided directly prior to the permitting phase.

***Response:*** *This observation is accurate, until the permitting and design phase is initiated many answers regarding the specifics of the tree removal process are not yet determined. This document is a precursor to the design and permitting phase. As noted, the CAA has committed to a pre-permitting meeting with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will*

*be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and these agencies.*

**<u>Town of Wethersfield,</u> Jeff Bridges, Wethersfield Town Council <u>– May 22, 2017</u>**

**Comment 1 (Paragraph 3):**
Generally speaking the Town would encourage the Connecticut Airport Authority to develop an obstruction removal plan that requires the least amount of impact while attaining compliance with Federal Aviation Administration regulations. The Environmental Impact Statement recommends the "Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative" in order to be compliant with the regulations as to obstructions in the Threshold Surface. As heard in the public hearings, impacts even with this modified approach may be severe. Further details and vetting of this alternative are necessary.

***Response:*** *CAA agrees to work with FAA, CTDEEP, and local municipalities to further reduce the clearing area of the Modified Obstruction Removal Alternative. During the review of the draft document, CAA has identified a potential 25% reduction of tree obstruction removals. Additional tree height surveys during the design process may further identify locations that do not require obstruction removal.*

*Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and these agencies. As such, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits.*

**Comment 2 (Paragraph 4):**
The Draft Environmental Assessment finds that there are no environmental impacts from the proposed work, we have heard from the information at the public hearings this may not be the case. Erosion and sedimentation from the removal of the trees is a concern as is impacts to wildlife in the proposed area of work. These impact need to be further investigation and mitigation plans further defined.

***Response****: The Draft EA finds that there are no anticipated "significant" environmental impacts. The evaluations were based on federal policies and applicable thresholds that determine "significance". At the completion of an EA and issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), the lead agency is concluding that impacts may exist, but it is anticipated that they can be mitigated (typically through permit conditions) to the point where significant impacts on the natural and human environmental are avoided.*

*Additional environmental review is anticipated during the design and permitting process to investigate public and agency concerns including obtaining the appropriate soil and erosion control permits required for this project. Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and these agencies. As such, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits.*

**Comment 3 (Paragraph 5):**
The Connecticut Airport Authority will need to secure permits from the Town of Wethersfield Inland

Wetlands and Watercourses Commission prior to the commencement of any work.

***Response**: Coordination with the CTDEEP Inland Water Resources Division (IWRD) will be completed to determine any requirements to satisfy the Connecticut Inland Wetland Protection Act. Although there will be no actual filling of wetlands the conversion of existing forested wetlands to scrub/shrub and emergent systems will alter the wetland systems and it is anticipated that state wetland permits will likely be needed. These changes will need to be documented and considered by CTDEEP, along with BMPs and mitigation measures. Presently the CAA is exempt from having to file Flood Management Certifications (FMC) with the CTDEEP Inland Water Resources Division (IWRD).*

*As such, assuming that State wetland permits from CTDEEP will be necessary at a minimum, this may avoid the need to separately obtain permits from the Town Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.*

**Comment 4 (Paragraph 6):**
The Connecticut Airport Authority is required to work with the Wethersfield Tree Warden, Cory Christians, on the proposed tree cutting and mitigation measures.

***Response**: Agreed. As noted above, the CAA Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies which can include the Wethersfield Tree Warden.*

**Comment 5 (Paragraph 7):**
A long term monitoring plan should be developed for the area to make sure if any work is done and mitigations implemented, then the effectiveness of those mitigations can be measured and if necessary further actions can be taken to offset impacts.

***Response**: Agreed, it is anticipated that the tree removal plans will include a long-term vegetation maintenance plan. The anticipated permits will also require a monitoring component. CAA's goal is that this project results in a plan that address local concerns, monitoring, and maintenance of the tree heights into the future.*

**Comment 6 (Paragraph 8):**
Although not directly related to the proposed work there is a consistent problem with plans not following the noise abatement procedures. The Connecticut Airport Authority needs to do more to educate and implement these procedures for the Hartford-Brainard Airport.

***Response**: Comment noted and under consideration separately from this study.*

## Private Organization Comments & Responses

The following agencies provided comments on the Draft EA for the above referenced project:

- Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Andrew Minikowski – January 25, 2017
- Park Watershed, Mary Rickel Pelletier – February 10, 2017
- The Nature Conservancy, David Gumbart – February 10, 2017
- KNOX, Ryan O'Halloran – February 14, 2017

Responses to each comment are provided below. The responses include several clarifications, as well as concurrence to adhere to environmental best practices. The response may also include a revision to the EA sections, where indicated. Please note, many of the responses are related to activities that will occur in the future, during the design and permitting process.

For the convenience of the reader, both the comment and response are provided below.

**Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Andrew Minikowski – January 25, 2017**

**Comment 1** (*The Draft EA/EIE Fails to Adequately Consider Environmental Impacts on Freshwater Wetlands and Important Wildlife Habitat*):
"Overall, the Draft EA/EIE does not consider, in sufficient depth, the likely environmental impacts that will ensue as the result of removing up to 40 total acres of trees across eight distinct parcels of land. As the current analysis correctly notes, the majority of the land impacted by the preferred alternative of modified obstruction removal consists of deciduous floodplain forests and palustrine forested wetlands. What is absent from the analysis, however, is a detailed accounting of anticipated impacts and realistic mitigation strategies. Despite the stated objective of removing numerous, well-developed wetland trees, the Draft EA/EIE summarily concludes that such action will have no effect on the valuable services provided by wetlands, such as sediment retention, flood control, or riverbank stabilization. Although CAA identifies that tree removal may result in habitat loss, deoxygenation of adjacent waters, and possible soil loss from construction equipment activity, the Draft EA/EIE cursorily states that best management practices ("BMPs") will be employed and leaves its mitigation analysis at that. Employing the language of mitigation does not equate to actual, concrete mitigation practices. The forested wetlands affected under the preferred alternative are doubly important given their role as riparian wetlands which stabilize the banks of the Connecticut River, a watercourse which is subject to regular seasoning flooding. The current analysis devotes scant attention to how the removal of stabilizing wetland trees will impact seasoning flooding in the impacted area. Rather, CAA postpones any significant analysis of wetland impacts by stating it will coordinate with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("DEEP") and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACOE") at a subsequent phase of the project. CAA should be coordinating with these agencies now to ensure that all impacts are fully anticipated and mitigation properly accounted for. The Draft EA/EIE provides no evidence that CAA has begun consulting with DEEP or USACOE in any meaningful way."

"Similarly, the Draft EA/EIE omits serious analysis concerning the likely impacts that will result on wildlife habitat, namely that of endangered and threatened species. CAA's evaluation begins promisingly, noting the presence of both the American kestrel *(Falco sparverius)* and Bald Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* within the sites that the preferred alternative will disrupt. Both species are

rigorously protected under various state and federal laws. Indeed, the Draft EA/EIE correctly notes that the Bald Eagle is on the rebound along the Connecticut River, with confirmed nesting during the 2016 breeding season and several years prior in the exact sites slated for tree removal under the preferred alternative. The Draft EA/EIE, however, then devotes much of its analysis to potential impacts on forest breeding interior bird species and the Northern Long-eared Bat *(Myotis septentrionalis)- neither* of which are even at risk of being affected by the preferred alternative. Yet, as to those species actually affected by tree removal at the proposed site-the American kestrel and Bald Eagle-CAA offers a brief proposal to institute a 660 foot no-cut zone around any active Bald Eagle nest. This proposition is devoid of support. The Draft EA/EIE cites no source or sound wildlife management practice as the origin of the 660 foot figure, leaving the public with the impression that this figure is arbitrary. Similarly, given the complete lack of analysis in this section, it is impossible to determine whether such a buffer would even be practicable in every site where a Bald Eagle nest is located. In some cases, a 660 foot buffer would almost certainly leave some obstructive trees within the airspace, thereby calling into question whether this project is even that necessary or whether CAA is actually serious about maintaining such a buffer zone-assuming it is actually supported by sound science-in place."

***Response 1:*** *The EA is not the appropriate document to conduct and provide the detailed evaluation and impact mitigation. Rather is it used to identified if a project's impacts can likely be mitigated to avoid significant impacts. The detailed analysis requested by CFE does not occur until after the EA is completed and the detailed design commences. Completion of the EA will permit the specific questions of CFE to be addressed. Completion of the EA is not an approval to advance the actual tree obstruction removal; that requires permit approvals.*

*The CAA has been coordinating with the CTDEEP since the study inception, beginning with the scoping documents it provided in July 2015 (Appendix B). Recognizing that CTDEEP is charged with the duty of protecting public lands, pre-permitting meetings will be conducted prior to advancing the design phase with CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate. All work completed on behalf of this project will proceed as directed in the approved project permits issued by CTDEEP and will have been informed by the appropriate agencies such as the ACOE, and lands owned, controlled or managed on behalf of the affected municipalities.*

*In regard to potential impacts to wetlands or watercourses, please note that the pre-permitting meeting referenced above will determine the need for and extent of wetland delineations and functional assessment, soil and erosion controls, hydrological analysis, biological surveys of critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state). CAA has agreed to conduct surveys in the project areas at the end of Runways 2, 20 and 29, by a qualified ornithologist, and develop a bald eagle protection plan. The results of the surveys and the plan will be sent to the NDDB for review.*

*This effort will also include additional details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal, which will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP Land and Water Resources Division and other agencies such as the ACOE. As such, tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed upon obtaining required project permits. Tree removal methodologies to be used within upland areas, floodplains, forested wetland areas, and critical habitat areas, may differ, and will proceed as directed in any project permits.*

**Comment 2** (*the Draft EA/EIE Disregards Local Land Use Regulations and the Critical Role of Urban Forests):*
"One of the more striking failings of the Draft EA/EIE is that it overlooks the local land use regulations and controls that determine which activities may and may not validly be conducted on the very property that the preferred alternative proposes to impact. This is more than a mere oversight in the drafting process, but a serious and disturbing lack of due diligence on the part of CAA. The failure to draft the EA/EIE in accord with applicable land use controls renders the Draft EA/EIE inadequate. CAA must either withdraw its current proposal or start over and redo its analysis on the basis of actual, applicable municipal regulation and private property restrictions.

First, the Draft EA/EIE is utterly inconsistent with the relevant zoning of the affected property under Hartford's zoning regulations. Remarkably, the Draft EA/EIE fails to even mention the correct zoning of the property and, indeed, purports that the impacted land is zoned for industrial use, which is incorrect. Under Hartford's most recent zoning map, the land on which CAA proposes to remove the allegedly obstructive trees is zoned as Connecticut River Overlay. Per the zoning regulations, such overlay "is intended to improve access and enjoyment of the Connecticut River through carefully planned, use-specific development that is sensitive to the ecology of an urban waterway. As the Draft EA/EIE relies on incorrect zoning from the outset, its analysis naturally does not account for the impacted land's zoning as Connecticut River Overlay and accordingly fails to demonstrate how tree removal is consistent with the goals of that particular zoning overlay."

***Response 2:*** *In regard to zoning, this project does not propose any development. Zoning is used to appropriately regulate development, and to define the use of the land. This project has no effect on zoning or land use; nevertheless, the zoning language on Page 4-2 of the EA has been edited to reflect language in the zoning code dated December 2016 and the map dated April 2017:*

> *According to the Hartford Zoning Map, dated April 13, 2017 the Airport is zoned Industrial District (ID-1) with a Connecticut River Overlay. Properties located north of the Airport have the same zoning (ID-1 with Connecticut River Overlay) Lands to the east and adjacent to the Connecticut River are zoned Open Space (OS). Lands west of the Airport including west of I-91 are zoned as an Industrial District (ID-1). The purpose of the ID-1 industrial district in the city is to provide for medium to heavy industry characterized by a minimum of noise, odor, glare, and pollution, and by moderate traffic upon the public streets. It is the purpose of this district to encourage the continuance and expansion of industry of this kind and its creation, and to develop a more compatible relationship between such industry and surrounding residential areas.*

*In regard to "urban forests' the CAA is committed to working with City of Hartford, the Town of Wethersfield, and the Connecticut Nature Conservancy as it relates to the Tree Maintenance Plan.*

**Comment 3** The Draft EA/EIE does not take into account the City of Hartford's tree protections in the context of its proposal. Research strongly suggests that the presence of trees and other green spaces within urban areas has significant social benefits, including a decrease in mental health issues and crime rates. Hartford has recognized the critical role that trees play in the urban environment by affording robust protection to Hartford's trees in its zoning regulations. In pertinent part, the tree-specific goals of Chapter 6 of the zoning regulations include "the prudent use of water and energy resources by achieving and maintaining sustainable, functional landscapes" and "to mitigate the impacts of climate change through prudent management of natural resources and wildlife habitat." The current Draft

EA/EIE not only overlooks this aspect of the zoning regulations, but fails to undertake any analysis pursuant to it.

Similarly, it bears mentioning that Hartford has enacted a comprehensive and progressive municipal tree ordinance. Recognizing the paramount importance of urban forestry, the ordinance specifically recognizes that Hartford's trees alone remove 2,400 tons of carbon, 73 tons of other pollutants, and 37 tons of asthma inducing particulate matter from the atmosphere per year. Accordingly, Hartford's trees are stringently protected under the ordinance. No person may remove a tree without consent of the City Forester and the removal of certain trees requires the replacement of those trees in order to ameliorate any overall tree loss. The relevant portions of the Draft EA/EIE, however, make no mention of the tree ordinance, how CAA plans to comply with its substantive provisions, and no indication that CAA has begun to coordinate with the City Forester. As the very trees CAA proposes to remove are protected by the ordinance, this is an extraordinary defect in the Draft EA/EIE and must be rectified.

***Response 3:*** *The CAA recognizes the City's Tree Ordinance and committed to working with the City of Hartford as appropriate.*

**Comment 4**: "As the Draft EA/EIE notes, as part of the preferred alternative, some trees selected for removal will be located within the boundaries of the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area. Although the Draft EA/EIE alleges that only a small amount of tree removal will occur on this property, the importance of those trees removed are heightened given the property's use as a designated state wildlife area and the role that the current level of tree cover plays in providing wildlife habitat in an otherwise urban, highly developed area of the state. Of critical importance is the fact that, as CAA acknowledges, there is no tree management plan applicable to this property. Despite this lack of guidance as to what site specific steps must be taken to ensure ecologically sound tree removal, the Draft EA/EIE contains no indication that CAA has opened a dialogue with DEEP or other relevant stakeholders but rather defers such integral coordination to a later date. This lack of process and communication in the face of nonexistent tree management standards is unacceptable. CAA must coordinate with DEEP to identify articulable standards in order to best protect the valuable ecological resources of the Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area."

***Response 4:*** *The CAA has been coordinating with the CTDEEP since its inception beginning with the scoping documents it provided in July 2015 (Appendix B). Recognizing that CTDEEP is charged with the duty of protecting public lands, pre-permitting meetings will be conducted prior to advancing the design phase. All work completed on behalf of this project will proceed as directed in the approved project permits issued by CTDEEP and will have been informed by the appropriate agencies such as the ACOE, and lands owned, controlled or managed on behalf of the affected municipalities. Please refer to the response to Comment 1 above.*

**Comment 5**: "The Draft EA/EIE gives insufficient regard to the fact that much of the tree removal will also occur on land protected under conservation easements held by the Nature Conservancy. The Folly Brook Natural Area, as the conservation easement lands are known, is subject, unlike Keeney Cove Marsh State Wildlife Area, to an ongoing tree maintenance plan entered into between the Nature Conservancy and the City of Hartford in 1990. The Draft EA/EIE contains absolutely no detail as to what this plan requires of CAA or how it intends to comply with the plan's provisions-whatever they may be. Similarly, the Draft EA/EIE contains no indication that CAA has reached out to the Nature Conservancy and begun coordinating with that organization."

***Response 5:*** *See responses to Comments 1-3 above. Correspondence with the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut Inc. was initiated in October 2015. The EA document illustrates the boundary of the easement, the tree maintenance plan associated with the easement for the protection of the airport, and acknowledges that tree removals would be consistent with that plan.*

**Comment 6** (*The Draft EA/EIE Contains No Analysis on Climate Change):*
CFE also harbors serious concerns over the fact that Draft EA/EIE does not contain any analysis concerning the climate change implications of removing numerous riparian trees along an urban waterway that is already prone to flooding. Forested areas provide critical ecosystem services by serving as carbon sinks that absorb the excess atmospheric carbon dioxide that contributes to climate change? Such resources are particularly valuable in communities like Hartford where the prevailing urban landscape means that there are fewer large parcels of green space containing mature trees. As previously noted, Hartford's tree ordinance makes specific reference to the contributions that trees make to the city in terms of carbon sequestration. Under the Draft EA/EIE, it is difficult to discern the exact number of trees that will be removed and thus the localized and statewide climatological impacts. Although anthropogenic climate change is an ecological crisis on a global scale, its localized effects are relevant in the present matter where the proposed tree removal will expose a riverbank flanking a major urban area to increased soil instability, flooding, and erosion.

Similarly, CFE strongly urges CAA to conduct a study on the statewide impacts that will result from the cumulative impacts resulting from all of CAA's proposed tree removal projects at various airports throughout the state. In isolation, a project like that proposed at the Hartford- Brainard Airport may seem small in scale. The planning for this project, however, is proceeding concurrent with other projects proposed at the Groton-New London Airport and Killingly-Danielson Airport, with presumed additional removal projects to occur at other airports. Given that the aggregate number of trees removed in accordance with these proposals will be vast, CAA must include in the final EA/EIE an analysis of the effects on carbon sequestration at the programmatic level. Furthermore, relevant law requires that CAA conduct an analysis of the project's cumulative impacts as part of its EIE review."

***Response 6:*** *FAA and DEEP do not have specific policies or guidelines to evaluate the impacts of tree removal as it relates to climate change. FAA Desktop Reference 1050.1F addresses climate change as it relates to creation of CO2 emissions. At the federal and state level, climate change impacts are now being reviewed with respect to projects with developments and facilities that result in additional CO2 emissions. This project will remove tall trees, but retain the vegetative state of the property, and will not produce CO2 emissions.*

*At the conclusion of this project, the remaining vegetation will continue to grow including both trees and understory. As such, all areas will remain vegetated and wooded, with no development or facilities. Federal standards to not address tree removal itself as a potential significant impact on climate change.*

*In regards to the potential for erosion, the CAA is required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) for all areas affected by removals to the CTDEEP during the design and permitting phase. The SWPCP will include measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post construction stormwater management for tree removal areas and access areas. The tree removals cannot advance without such permits, which provide the measures necessary to prevent significant erosion.*

*Without changes in airport activity, airport facilities, and or new development, the proposed project does*

*not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. The affected area will remain open and vegetated; the FAA does not consider the potential changes in oxygen and carbon dioxide from tree obstruction removal to be substantial enough to impact area residents. As such, based on federal standards and practices, air quality and "environmental justice" impacts are not anticipated from this project. Please note that this conclusion is not intended to minimize the existing air quality and associated health concerns in the City of Hartford, or to local low-income and minority populations.*

The FAA considered the potential for cumulative impacts resulting from tree removal projects at various airports throughout the state. Based on NEPA procedure guidelines, the project type, and the distinct implementation plans and schedules, the lead agency concluded that this project would be evaluated on its merits, without links to other airports.

**Comment 7:** (*Overall, the Draft EA/EIE Contains a Disturbing Number of Errors and Assumptions):*
Finally, CFE is deeply troubled by the lack of care and attention to detail that seemingly went into conducting the analysis that the EA/EIE process requires. The document is rife with factual and legal mistakes, generic descriptions and analyses, and an alarming absence of specificity. As mentioned in Section II of these comments, the Draft EA/EIE either does not mention controlling land use regulations relevant to the preferred alternative or cites to inapplicable provisions. At several points through the document, the Draft EA/EIE refers to the impacts on the "Windham Airport" or the "Waterbury-Oxford Airport," leaving the public with the unsavory impression that portions of the analysis were simply reused from previous analyses conducted for completely different projects. Indeed, a comparison of the Draft EA/EIE for this project with the documents for the Groton-New London and Killingly-Danielson projects reveals an astounding similarity between all three analyses, as if CAA were working from a common template rather than evaluating the specific impacts on three wildly different locations. In totality, these errors and substantive defects indicate that CAA is not undertaking its statutory duty to evaluate environmental impacts in a serious and diligent manner.

Astoundingly, the Draft EA/EIE makes no mention whatsoever of the fact there have been legitimate questions in recent years as to whether the Hartford-Brainard Airport will continue to operate in the future. During the previous legislative session, an investigative committee explored this very issue and ultimately recommended, at the time, to keep the airport in operation for the time being. Much may change over the next several years, given the potential economic burden the airport poses for Hartford. As work on the ground for CAA's preferred alternative will not commence for several years, it would be an inefficient use of public funds and time for CAA to plan an entire obstruction removal strategy only for the airport to close in the interim. The final EA/EIE must take into account this possibility and whether, as a result, it is even worth pursuing tree removal at this location in the first place."

***Response 7:*** *Corrections have been made to the draft EA to reflect the specific project as well as applicable land use regulations.*

*The airport is federally-obligated to remain in operation for public use. As such, and as stated in Section 2.0 Purpose and Need of the EA and at the public hearings, this project is required to promote safety by compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace.*

**Park Watershed, Mary Rickel Pelletier – February 10, 2017**

**Comment** (Paragraph 2):
We are especially concerned about migratory bird habitat and erosion control along the Connecticut River. The Final EA/EIE ought to include a summary of recent bash management reports, as well as a more detailed review of seasonal migratory bird habitat and a summary of how to best trim trees to increase safety without elimination of established bird habitat within the forest ecosystem. The Hartford Tree Commission has a robust Tree Ordinance, which will require compensation for trees eliminated, which is important for long term replacement of the ecosystem service benefits of the forest lost. More importantly, the City of Hartford has adopted new zoning regulations that include a *Connecticut River Overlay* Zone, which will need to be acknowledged and its interests addressed in the Final EA/EIE.

***Response:*** *The CAA is committed to working with the City of Hartford (which would include the Harford Tree Commission, and the Nature Conservancy as appropriate during the design and permitting of the project. In response to concerns of the CTDEEP and other agencies, the CAA will schedule a pre-permitting meeting with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of additional field work that addresses critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state) to be provided to CTDEEP and other agencies. These may include specific surveys for fauna, including migratory birds. As the project advances into the permitting phase, more detail regarding which specific trees are to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CTDEEP and other regulatory agencies. Soil erosion controls and permits are mandatory and will address measure to mitigate erosion and protect the Connecticut River.*

**The Nature Conservancy, David Gumbart – February 10, 2017**

**Comment** (Paragraph 3, 4, 5):
The easement we hold came about in response to the 1988 clear cutting of a part of Folly Brook by the Department of Transportation, for the purposes of maintaining airport safety. This easement does recognize that future vegetation management would be required to ensure airport safety, and the Conservancy understands and supports the need to maintain safe approach zones for air traffic. That said, we also want to ensure any cutting of trees and other vegetation is done so as to minimize the impact of the floodplain forest, preserving its value for nature and humans alike."

In section 5 of the easement, it states the City of Hartford and The Nature Conservancy "shall prepare a tree maintenance plan for the Protected Property." This plan was developed, and it established a map, with certain rights appurtenant to 4 distinct areas, labeled A-D. For section B, it states "The City and the Conservancy shall establish a written tree-cutting plan specific for this area" when future cutting is deemed necessary.

The Nature Conservancy has been in contact with the City of Hartford, and together we will plan on conducting a site visit to Folly Brook in the coming weeks. Area C and D on the tree maintenance plan map allow for only bona fide hazard trees to be removed; agreement on this is to be a case-by case basis. Other than along an existing maintenance road, use of vehicles in areas C and D for tree maintenance activity is not allowed.

***Response:*** *The easement and tree maintenance plan is discussed and illustrated in the EA document. The CAA will follow the requirements of the 1990 Tree Maintenance held between The Nature Conservancy*

*and the City of Hartford.*

**KNOX, Ryan O'Halloran – February 14, 2017**

**Comment- General Comment** (Paragraphs 2 and 3):
I would first like to endorse the letters of both the City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission and the Connecticut Fund for the Environment. While there is no need to entirely rehash their expert legal and environmental insights raised in regards to the draft, we would like to particularly reinforce the following concerns:

- Omission of the Hartford municipal tree ordinance and its impact on such an evaluation, especially in regards to replacement value of mature trees,
- Misclassification of various land slated for selective removal, especially those with environmental protections,
- Misjudgment of how such work would impact the Connecticut River and riparian buffers along the Connecticut River,
- Lack of public outreach to residents, official stakeholders, and concerned stakeholders. We would add that the lack of press release or any postings to social media in this day and age would show initial aversion to public input.

Just given these four glaring issues regarding the draft submitted for public comment, we recommend that the draft be pulled and rewritten in partnership with representatives including the City of Hartford City Forester, the City's Planning and Zoning Commission, the Mayor's Office, and their counterparts in the Towns of Wethersfield, East Hartford and Glastonbury."

***Response:*** *Per the request of local municipalities, CAA added three Public Hearing to present the study and collect public comments, and well as extended the public review process. This EA process represents the beginning rather than the end of the environmental review process. The issuance of a FONSI enables the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) to proceed to the more detailed analysis necessary to address environmental impacts and concerns, with involvement of local municipalities, and applicable local ordinances and easements.*

**Specific Comments**
**Comment 1** (Paragraph 5):
The draft makes no estimate (including a lack of an upper or lower limit) of the number of trees to be removed or their age, height, or contribution to the health of Hartford. The Connecticut Airport Authority was not able to provide any clarification on this question during the hearing. We do not understand how one can estimate the impact of tree removal on an environment without such estimates. Furthermore, the omission of this information makes providing any comments on such a draft extremely difficult. When KNOX seeks to understand the value of a tree to the people and environment that surrounds it, we need to understand its age, height, species and location. This is because mature trees provide the greatest benefit. Under Hartford's tree ordinance, an estimated number of trees to be removed would also inform the Connecticut Airport Authority's effort to mitigate environmental harm on a per-caliper-inch basis (as required by Hartford's municipal tree ordinance).

**Comment 2**
The draft does describe *some* steps to mitigate *some* environmental impacts (especially related to animal and bird species) among an untold number of trees. We have deep concern that any mitigation of

environmental impact hinges upon a large, complex tree maintenance job occurring exactly right, in Connecticut, in early winter. There is often a disconnect between theory and practice, and this project fails to acknowledge or seek to ascertain whether such complex maintenance practices are possible and/or likely to be achieved in practice.

Without further explanation or analysis, we do not believe that the conclusions made regarding protecting protected species, wetlands, or the Connecticut River and its riparian buffer are valid. We therefore recommend further analyses be taken to ascertain whether the proposed mitigation measures are feasible for this are and this scope (once an estimated number of trees to be removed is ascertained).

**Response to Comments 1 and 2:** *As noted in the response to comment 1 above this EA represents the beginning rather than the end of the Environmental review process. Prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of additional field work that addresses critical habitat, state listed plants, threatened or endangered species (federal and state) to be provided to CTDEEP and other agencies as identified by CTDEEP. These may include specific surveys for fauna, particularly avifauna. The CAA has already committed to surveys in the wooded areas at the end of Runways 2, 20 and 29, for bald eagles. As the project advances into the permitting phase, more detail regarding which specific trees are to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be thoroughly coordinated with the CT DEEP and other regulatory agencies.*

*Updated tree height survey will be needed for the development of the removal plans. CAA concurs that there is a meaningful differential between the height of obstructions to the Threshold Surface and the Approach Surfaces, and will work with CTDEEP to minimize the final removal area using current tree height data.*

**Comment 3 – Environmental Justice:**
The discussion of **environmental justice** and the impact of this work on the residents of Hartford is entirely in adequate. To quote the draft, "In regards to civil rights and environmental justice, the EPA defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies." We assert that in Hartford, fair treatment and meaningful involvement would include outreach to those for whom Spanish is their language of choice. A Spanish-speaking person would certainly not be able to understand the presentation and question and answer session that has already occurred. We advise the Connecticut Airport Authority to review the following map provided by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, where Hartford, and specifically the area of Hartford near Brainard, is one of the two locations in all of Connecticut with the greatest number of Spanish speakers with limited English proficiency.

Furthermore, the section on environmental justice also fails to mention:

- Hartford's extraordinarily high asthma rate and relation of Hartford's urban forest to this issue,
- How the removal of these mature trees will impact quality of life, flow of stormwater, or climate adaptability in the neighborhoods surrounding Brainard or the city,
- Whether <u>any</u> outreach to residents in the immediate surrounding neighborhoods was made. We would say this does not meet any threshold of "meaningful involvement."

***Response 3:*** *Three additional public hearings were conducted to expand the public outreach effort,*

*following the initial public meeting. For each use hearing, public notice included advertisement in four newspapers of general circulation including LaVoz, a Spanish print newspaper. A Spanish interpreter was made available at the public hearing located in the City of Hartford. No one requested assistance at this meeting.*

***In regards to additional concerns regarding environmental justice:***

- *Asthma Rate: Without changes in airport activity, airport facilities, and or new development, the proposed project does not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. The affected area will remain open and vegetated; the FAA does not consider the potential changes in oxygen and carbon dioxide from tree obstruction removal to be substantial enough to impact area residents. As such, based on federal standards and practices, air quality and "environmental justice" impacts are not anticipated from this project.*
- *Quality of Life: This project has impacts to the natural environment, that CAA and FAA believe can be mitigated. Such mitigation of potential ecological concerns, is believed will avoid and indirect impact to human quality of life.*
- *Climate: FAA and DEEP do not have specific policies or guidelines to evaluate the impacts of tree removal as it relates to climate change. FAA Desktop Reference 1050.1F addresses climate change as it relates to creation of $CO_2$ emissions. At the federal and state level, climate change impacts are now being reviewed with respect to projects with developments and facilities that result in additional $CO_2$ emissions. This project will remove tall trees, but retain the vegetative state of the property, and will not produce $CO_2$ emissions. Thus, significant impacts to the climate area not anticipated.*
- *Stormwater: The project will require preparation and approval of a Storm Water Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP), which will address erosion and stormwater impacts.*
- *Outreach: Three additional public hearings were added to the outreach effort, and were advertised in four newspapers of general circulation including LaVoz, a Spanish print newspaper. A Spanish interpreter was made available at the public hearing located in the City of Hartford. No one requested assistance at this meeting. The study includes a public website with project and meeting information, study documents, and submission of comments.*

## Public Comments & Reponses

The general public provided comments at a public meeting, formal public hearings, via email, and written correspondence. All written (i.e., email, letter, and comment cards) are reproduced in this document. Verbal comments at the three public hearings were recorded and transcribed, and are also included in this document. Approximately 113 emails/letters or phone calls were received from the public. Approximately 55 persons (in total) spoke at the Public Hearings held on April 18th, April 19th and April 27th, 2017, which were attended by approximately 102 people (total). All comments received regarding this project are include in their entirety in Appendix B of this document.

Many public comments focused on similar issues, including those expressed by environmental agencies and organizations. All the public comments were reviewed and organized by category so that applicable responses could be provided herein. Below is a summary of the primary comment subjects, followed by a general response. Comments and responses are not ranked or in any priority order.

**Comment: Approximately 8 comments were received identifying concerns related to the proposed tree removal affecting climate change or global warming.**

***Response:*** *FAA and DEEP do not have specific policies or guidelines to evaluate the impacts of tree removal as it relates to climate change. FAA desktop reference 1050.1F addresses climate change as it relates to creation of additional carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. At the federal and state level, climate change impacts are reviewed with respect to projects that result in new developments and facilities that create additional CO2 emissions. This project will remove tall trees, but will not produce CO2 emissions.*

*At the conclusion of this project, the remaining vegetation will continue to grow, including both trees and understory. As such, affected areas will remain vegetated and wooded, with substantially less effect on climate than if the project was to include development of the area. Federal standards to not address tree removal itself as a potential significant impact on climate change.*

*It is should be noted and as stated in the EA that this project addresses safety issues related to obstructions, it will not result in any change in airport operations.*

**Comment: 26 public comments were concerned about the tree cutting process, suggesting the project is clear cutting.**

***Response:*** *The EA document uses the terms "selective removal area and tree removal area". Chapter 3 describes these terms as including removal of tall trees, with retention of small trees and underbrush, with the areas remaining vegetative. On the Study Area maps, the areas labeled "tree removal area" refers to locations where the majority of trees would be removed as most are existing obstructions. These locations are typically close to the runway ends. The areas of "selective removal of trees" include locations with only the tallest trees would be removed. In both areas, tree stumps would be left in place to minimize ground disturbance and potential erosion. This practice prevents or reduces impacts to wetlands, floodplains, and recreational resources. The study does not consider either approach to be clear cutting, where essentially all trees and shrubs are removed.*

*Two alternatives are also described in the EA, which involved the extent of the area for tree removal. The Full Removal Alternative would address penetrations to the larger FAR Part 77 Imaginary Surfaces – this alternative is not being pursued. The EA recommends the Modified Removal Alternative, which removes tree penetrations to only the smaller 'threshold surface' to comply with the minimum FAA design standards. In other words, the Modified Removal Alternative includes less area and less potential impacts.*

**Comment: Approximately 16 public comments were concerned that trees act as a sound barrier, and removal will increase noise and will reduce visual aesthetics.**

***Response****: Airport studies have shown that the majority of airport noise exposure in locations surrounding airports is from aircraft that are in flight (takeoffs or landings). While dense trees can have some minor attenuation of noise from aircraft on the ground, the affect is minor and rarely changes the level of noise impact. Furthermore, as the airport is surrounded by a large flood control levee, aircraft ground noise is more likely to be mitigated by such a solid feature than by trees.*

*The tree removal areas are visible from the Connecticut River and from the inlet to Wethersfield Cove, but not from the cove itself or from nearby residences. The tree removal areas are located to the east of Interstate 91 corridor, and other wooded areas will remain between obstruction removal locations and populated areas.*

**Comment: 34 members of the public expressed concern that cutting the trees will reduce air quality (i.e., reducing oxygen, increasing carbon dioxide, pollution), increase odors, and worsen the existing asthma incidence.**

***Response:*** *Without changes in airport activity or any new development, the proposed project does not result in emission of pollutants or greenhouse gasses. As the area will remain open and vegetated, the FAA does not consider the potential changes in oxygen generation from tree obstruction removal to be substantial enough to impact area residents. As such, per federal standards and practices, air quality impacts are not anticipated from this project.*

*As the City of Hartford does contain a high proportion of minority and low-income populations, any socioeconomic impacts may also have concerns for "environmental justice". However, the finding of the EA concluded that the proposed tree removal has ecological concerns, but will not significantly impact air quality, odor, noise, recreation, or other social considerations for area residents.*

*Note: This conclusion is not intended to minimize the existing and documented air quality and health concerns in Hartford, or to local low-income and minority populations.*

**Comment: Approximately 16 comments were received regarding the potential for erosion and sedimentation impacts.**

*Response: The CAA is required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) for all areas affected by the tree removals to the CTDEEP during the design and permitting phase. The SWPCP will include measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post construction stormwater management for tree removal areas and access areas. The project cannot advance without such permits, which provide the measures necessary to prevent significant erosion.*

**Comment: Approximately 9 comments were received related to the floodplain and wetland impacts within the project area, also stating that cutting the proposed trees may reduce the water quality and increase flooding.**

***Response:*** *The proposed methods of tree removal would primarily include removal of all sizable trees, but retain small trees and underbrush. Tree stumps would be left in place to minimize ground disturbance. The project avoids filling and grading activities to reduces impacts to wetlands, floodplains, and erosion.*

*The CAA is required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) for all areas affected by removals to the CTDEEP during the design and permitting phase. The SWPCP will include measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post construction stormwater management for tree removal areas and access areas. It has also been concluded that a state wetland permit will also be required by the CTDEEP. The tree removals cannot advance without such permits, which provide the measures necessary to prevent significant impacts. It is anticipated that federal and local wetland permits will not be required.*

**Comment: Approximately 8 comments were concerned with mitigation oversite of the project. Who will be coordinating the environmental impacts and how will they be reinforced after the trees are cut?**

***Response*:** *While several agencies will be part of the review and permitting process, the CTDEEP is the permitting authority and is responsible for general oversight and for approval of the access, means and methods, mitigation, and requirements of the tree removal. The CAA is responsible to adhere to any permitting requirements, both pre- and post-removal. It is anticipated that site monitoring will be required for multiple years following the project, with periodic site visits and annual report submissions.*

**Comment: 21 comments focused on invasive species control and potential replanting after the project is complete.**

***Response:*** *The required project permits must also address invasive species control, particularly in wetlands. Replanting is not typically conducted as part of an obstruction removal project, but can be included if required for impact mitigation. Replanting may also be considered as part of a forest management plan created for the obstruction removal areas. Such requirements will be determined during the design and permitting process.*

**Comment: Approximately 10 comments asked about the potential to create trail(s) for recreational/educational purposes, and improvement public access to the riverfront after the project is complete.**

***Response:*** *The CAA is fully supportive of recreational use and public access in the tree removal areas. The FAA considers passive recreational activities to be compatible with the airport (those without facilities where persons congregate).*

*Note that the property of the tree removal areas is not owned by the CAA. The majority of the affected property is owned by the City of Hartford. The portion of the obstruction removal area within the Town of Wethersfield is leased to the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut. As such, the potential for adding trails and recreational activities is a question for those municipalities and organizations.*

**Comment: Approximately 41 comments were related to bird species (including the Bald Eagle) and other wildlife species that may be impacted, particularly in the Folly Brook Natural Area and other floodplain forest.**

***Response:*** *It is noted throughout the EA that prior to design and permitting, a pre-permitting meeting will be scheduled with the CTDEEP and other agencies as appropriate to determine the need for and extent of additional field work to addresses critical habitat, state listed plants, and threatened or endangered species (federal and state). The activities may include formal biological surveys (as determined by CTDEEP). In addition, more details regarding the specific trees to be removed and the methodology used for their removal will be coordinated with the CTDEEP and other agencies. Tree removal methodologies will proceed as directed in approved project permits, that will consider the species of concern.*

*It is acknowledged that the full potential impacts to birds and species of concern has not yet been fully determined. However, it should be noted that removal activities cannot commence until this is completed to the satisfaction of CTDEEP, and permits are issues that mitigate any such impacts.*

**Comment: 10 comments requested clarification on whether the proposed tree cutting will change airport operations (i.e. changing flight patterns, increasing air traffic, expanding runways, etc.) and/or requested an alternative that further displaced the runway thresholds.**

***Response:*** *As stated in Chapter 2 of the Final EA "The purpose of this study, and any future actions as a result, is to promote safety by bringing the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace." This is a common goal of any airport obstruction removal project. Specific to Hartford-Brainard Airport the goal is remove those obstructions necessary to provide adequate safety, and to minimize impacts to Folly Brook and the floodplain forest. This project will not affect the numbers of flights, annual operations, or result in changes in the flight patterns. The need for the proposed action is not dependent on the current or future activity level of the airport. Rather, as the operator a public-use airport, CAA is required to clear obstructions to the identified airspace.*

*Regarding the runway displaced thresholds (the landing point located further down runway – not at the runway end), the CAA has displaced the existing thresholds on three of the four runway ends due to the location of the flood control levee. The displaced thresholds reduce the amount of tree removal required. However, additional displacement would reduce the ability of the airport to accommodate airport users. As such, CAA plans to reduce the tree clearing area to the minimum required, but without further displacing the runway thresholds.*

**Comment: 12 comments were received related to the future of the airport, whether the airport will be closing, and if so, the proposed removal would not be necessary.**

***Response:*** *As a public-use airport in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), and a facility supported by federal grants from the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), the Airport is required to stay open to public-use. The CAA is required to advance safety projects to bring the airport into compliance with federal design standards and regulations regarding clear airspace. There is no plan, alternative, or option to close the airport per federal requirements.*

**Comment: Approximately 12 members of the public provided comments regarding flight operations that do not using the noise mitigation route over the River and fly over the Old Wethersfield community. The public is concerned about the noise and vibrations.**

***Response:*** *This project addresses safety issues related to obstruction removal, and does not address flight operations, or flight patterns. The CAA has and continues to address this issue, and encourages airport users to practice the voluntary noise mitigation procedures.*

**Comment: Approximately 7 comments were concerned about the financial costs of the project. Who is responsible for paying?**

***Response:*** *This EA study is funded 90% by the FAA and 10% by the CAA; the surrounding municipalities are not financially responsible for this project. The federal funding is provided from the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and Trust Fund, which is funded by aviation taxes on airline tickets, aviation fuel taxes, and other user fees. The obstruction removal effort, and essentially all airfield and safety projects, are funded via this program.*

**Comment: 10 comments acknowledged the changes to the DRAFT EA/EIE that reduced the proposed clearing area.**

***Response:*** *Based on initial study comments, the CAA reduced the recommend tree clearing area from approximately 40 acres to 30 acres.*

**Comment: A few comments requested release of an additional Draft of the EA document, prior to issuing the final report.**

***Response:*** *The completion of this EA process included the review and response to substantive comments, as well as changes to the EA document. Although an additional draft document was not released, three public hearings were added to the review process per the request of local municipalities. It was also determined that future public comments would be better addressed during the permitting process, when more specific information would be provided.*

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*Note: All comments received regarding this study are included in Appendix B. Comment responses comments are included in this Appendix (Appendix E). Changes to the EA as a result of any comments are underlined in the main body of the document.*